Jan. 23,1989

THE NEW YORKER

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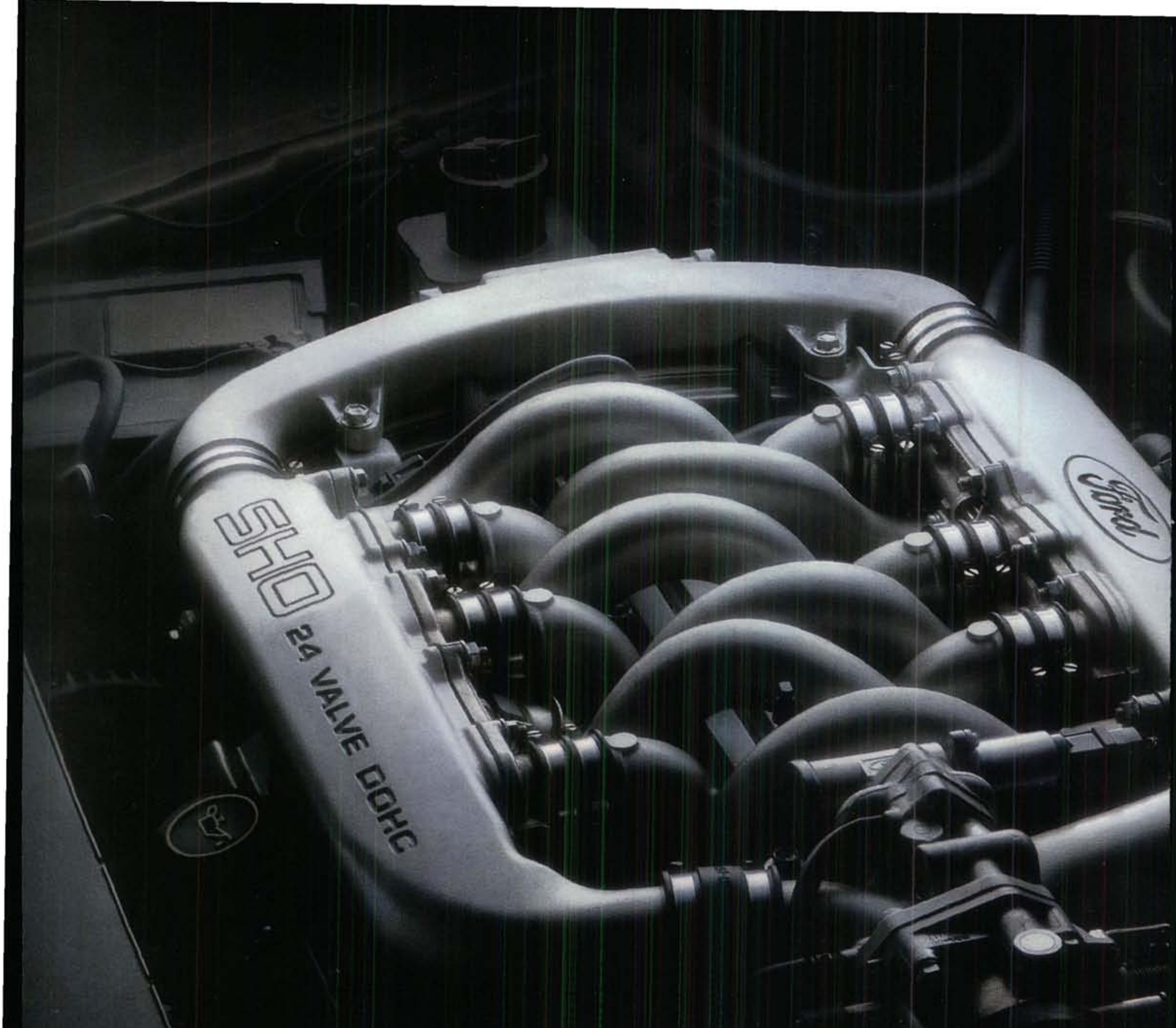

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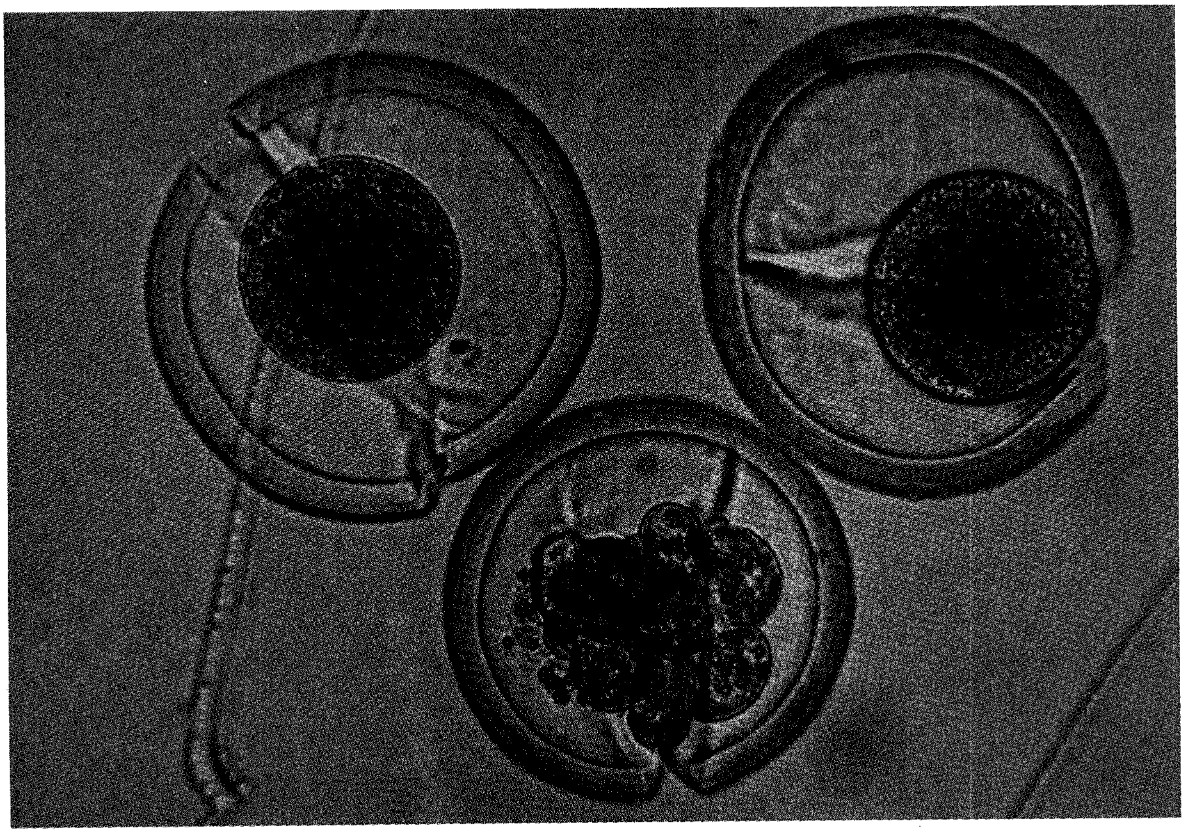

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THE NEW YORKER

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THE NEW YORKER

25 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036; Steven T. Florio, president and chief executive officer; Sam R. Spoto, vice-president; Stuart H. Jason, vice-president and treasurer; Ruth A. Diem, vice-president and human resources director; Frank Mustacato, vice-president and circulation director; Virginia L. Jespersen, vice-president and business manager; Lynn Guthrie Heiler, advertising director. Branch advertising offices: 111 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. 60601; 41 Osgood Place, San Francisco, Calif. 94133; Suite 1460, 5900 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036; 67½ Chestnut St., Boston, Mass. 02108; 19 South Audley St., London, W1Y 5DN. Metropolitan Publishers Representatives: 3017 Piedmont Road, NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30305; 2500 So. Dixie Highway, Miami, Fla. 33133; 3016 Mason Place, Tampa, Fla. 33629; 3 Church St., Suite 503, Toronto, Canada. M5E 1M2. Vol. LXIV, No. 49, January 23, 1989. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. © 1989 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., in the United States and Canada. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. The magazine's name, logo, and various titles and headings herein have been registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $50.00. Other foreign, one year, $56.00, payable in advance.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80322.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more convincing or engaging. The play is as sensitive as it is funny, and the actors do it full justice, under Jack O'Brien's direction. Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/7/88.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Devil's Disciple—A tame production of Shaw's dashing melodrama. (11/28/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Eastern Standard—An imitation comedy that is as tedious as it is trendy. Seen recently at Manhattan Theatre Club, the show has now moved to Broadway. (11/14/88) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Enrico IV—Paul Hecht in the Pirandello play. Previews Jan. 17-18. Opens officially on the evening of Jan. 18. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

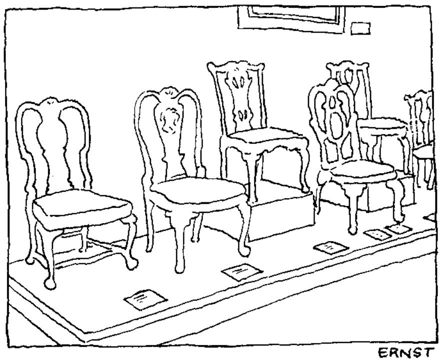
Equity Library Theatre—A revival of **tomfoolery,** the 1980 revue of Tom Lehrer songs, is the fourth in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Jan. 29. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Forbidden Broadway 1989—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8:30; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3:30.)

For Dear Life—You would have to go far to find a play more stupefying than this tedious and pointless offering from Susan Miller. Yet another yuppie spiel on white upper-middle-class urban themes (self-fulfillment, self-definition, and self-absorption), it brings the style and seriousness of "Hill Street Blues" to the concerns of "Thirtysomething," and requires the otherwise irreproachable Laila Robins to fall behind a sofa, legs in the air (like a dead chicken), after shrieking the words "I've earned this moment!" With Tony Shalhoub, a crass actor who seems to dote on the sound of his own voice. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Jan. 22.)

Genesis: Music and Miracles from the Medieval Mystery Plays—With a book and lyrics by A. J. Antoon and Robert Montgomery and a score by Michael Ward. Mr. Antoon is the director. Opens Jan. 17. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's new play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. (12/26/88) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)



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22	23	24	25			

H.M.S. Pinafore—Presented by the New Sadler's Wells Opera, a British company in its American début. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Jan. 17 at 7:30; Jan. 18-20 at 8; Jan. 21 at 2 and 8; Jan. 22 at 3 and 7:30; Jan. 24 at 8; and Jan. 25 at 1 and 8. Closes Jan. 29.)

I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transfom aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly, this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 8:30, and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

Legs Diamond—A musical built around Peter Allen, the only man in America less charismatic than George Bush. Mr. Allen put this show together like a leveraged buyout, and it has no book, no lyrics, and no good songs or dance numbers. The best that can be said of his co-star, Julie Wilson, is that she seems completely out of context. Warning: This one isn't even a hoot. (1/9/89) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Romberg's **the student prince.** Opens Jan. 18, and runs through Feb. 19. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Negro Ensemble Company—"We" is the umbrella title for a pair of plays by Charles Fuller—"Sally" and "Prince"—about recently freed slaves during the Civil War, some of them at loose ends and others in the Union Army. The plays are probably non-vintage Fuller, but they're interesting all the same. The acting is of N.E.C.'s usual high quality, with Michele Shay and Samuel L. Jackson in the title roles. Douglas Turner Ward directed. The plays will alternate weekly, with both scheduled on Sundays. "Sally": Jan. 18-22; "Prince": Jan. 22 and Jan. 25-28. (1/9/89) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 3, and Sundays at 2:30.)

Our Town—Spalding Gray's monotonous and cynical performance as the Stage Manager almost blights this revival of Thornton Wilder's masterpiece, but there is good work by Roberta Maxwell, Peter Maloney, Frances Conroy, Penelope Ann Miller, and Eric Stoltz. (12/19/88) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Phantasie—A play by Sybille Pearson, directed by John Rubinstein. (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Lisa Banes, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Sweethearts—Antoinette Mille and Walter Adkins in a musical tribute to Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Fridays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3. Closes Jan. 29.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton in a one-man contemporary version of Dickens' novel, commemorating, no doubt, the bicentennial of the French Revolution. Presented by the Ridiculous Theatrical Company. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271. Thursdays through Sundays at 8.)

'Tis the Morning—A play by Ruth Beckford and Ron Stacker Thompson. Miss Beckford is in the cast; Mr. Thompson directed. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 869-3981. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

York Theatre Company—Presenting **max and maxie,** a new play by James McLure. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Jan. 18, Jan. 20, and Jan. 25, all at 8; Jan. 21 at 3 and 8; and Jan. 22 at 3 and 7. Closes Jan. 29.)

Long Runs—**anything goes:** This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, Bill McCutcheon, and Howard McGillin, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes of John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **driving miss daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **frankie and johnny in the clair de lune:** Kathy Bates and Tony Campisi in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **into the woods:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **m. butterfly:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with David Dukes and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W.

49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** Jim Dale starring in an infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The real stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Michelle Horman, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

SKIN: A STATE OF BEING—A new theatre piece conceived and directed by Ping Chong. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Wednesday through Sunday at 7:30. Closes Jan. 22.)

ICE SHOW—The "Ice Capades," with Jill Watson, Peter Oppegard, and some skating California Raisins. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Jan. 19-20 at 7:30; Jan. 21 at 11, 3, and 7:30; Jan. 22 at 1:30; and Jan. 25 at 7:30. Through Jan. 29.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Jan. 17 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Bugaku," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 8: "The Waltz Project," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 2: "Divertimento No. 15," "Ivesiana," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 8: "Interplay," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Antique Epigraphs," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 1: "Interplay," "Bugaku," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 7: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "Bugaku," and "The Concert." . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "The Four Seasons," and a work performed by students from the School of American Ballet. (A benefit performance; for tickets, call 870-0600.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 26.)

MOISEYEV DANCE COMPANY—A hundred and thirty-five dancers and musicians from Moscow. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Jan. 17 at 7:30; Jan. 18-20 at 8; Jan. 21 at 2 and 8; Jan. 22 at 3; and Jan. 24-25 at 8. Through Jan. 29.)

CREACH/KOESTER—A two-week engagement by this two-man contemporary dance team. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 3. Through Jan. 29.)

"WOMAN WORKS"—Seven dance companies and two soloists. The groups of **MONICA LEVY** and **RISA JAROSLOW:** Jan. 17 at 8, and Jan. 21 at 2 and 8. . . . **SALLY GROSS'S** and **RUBY SHANG'S** troupes: Jan. 18 at 8. . . . ¶ The companies of **BEBE MILLER** and **ANNA SOKOLOW:** Jan. 19 at 8, and Jan. 22 at 2 and 7:30. . . . **BEVERLY BLOSSOM, MAEDÉE DUPRÈS,** and **ANNABELLE GAMSON** and her ensemble: Jan. 20 at 8. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

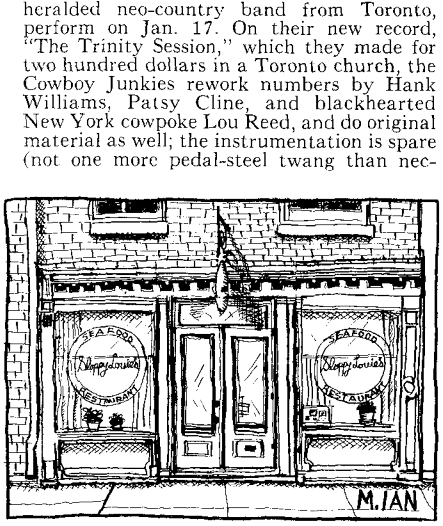
ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** a twenty-one-year-old New Orleans-born pianist and singer who likes to wear chalk-striped bop-era suits and wide, splashy ties and to refashion old songs in the style of T. Monk, has taken up residence in the starchy old Oak Room. He plays and sings (he has a languid, behind-the-beat way of singing) at nine-fifteen Tuesdays and Wednesdays and at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen Thursdays through Saturdays. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **HELEN SCHNEIDER,** a rock singer turned cabaret chanteuse, sings an all-Kurt Weill program at nine Wednesdays and Thursdays and at nine and eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A fledgling jazz operation that takes its name from a long-gone midtown pleasure dome (1949-65). It's a cool person's kind of habitat, with pastel walls and a high ceiling and some potted vegetation. A quintet led by trumpeter (and Class of '88 Jazz Messenger) **PHILIP HARPER** and drummer (and former Betty Carter sideman) **WINARD HARPER** holds forth Jan. 20-21. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. The **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET,** a group that has produced delicate, noble chamber jazz for over thirty-five years (with only one personnel change: **CONNIE KAY,** the drummer, replaced Kenny Clarke in 1955), will be around Jan. 17-22. **OSCAR PETERSON,** who plays a handful of notes for every one that **JOHN LEWIS,** the M.J.Q.'s pianist, sets down, begins a week-long run on Jan. 24. First set at nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On the east side of the building, behind a dusty display window, there's a New York *Post* review of a Santana concert that took place here circa 1978; curatorial neglect seems to have made it a permanent exhibit. Inside, the **COWBOY JUNKIES,** a much-heralded neo-country band from Toronto, perform on Jan. 17. On their new record, "The Trinity Session," which they made for two hundred dollars in a Toronto church, the Cowboy Junkies rework numbers by Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, and blackhearted New York cowpoke Lou Reed, and do original material as well; the instrumentation is spare (not one more pedal-steel twang than necessary), the singing (by Margo Timmins) is exceedingly quiet, and the results are largely colorless. The Cowboy Junkies treat country music with High Church solemnity, and just about succeed in taking the juice out of it. The **FEELIES,** who play here Jan. 20-21, share with the Cowboy Junkies an affection for Lou Reed (they do his "What Goes On" on their new album, "Only Life") and an interest in minimalist techniques. They aim to trance you out with their fervently strummed, chiming guitars, insistent rhythms, and vague vocals. A Feelies song rarely describes anything other than its own movement toward some sort of folk-rock "higher plane," a nice if somewhat bland place (a suburb of rock-and-roll Heaven) where the groove is about all that matters. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.



BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, tucked between a D'Agostino supermarket and a greengrocery. In 1969, when Bradley Cunningham and a partner bought it, it was called the Stirrup. Its light is distinctive, something between dim generic tavern light and refined haze; its patrons are famously gabby; its piano, which Paul Desmond bequeathed to Mr. Cunningham, has been played by many first-rate musicians, including Jimmy Rowles, Tommy Flanagan, and Dave McKenna. **RED MITCHELL,** a stellar bassist who plays piano on the side (in the late forties, before he joined Woody Herman, he was the pianist in Chubby Jackson's big band), will be here with pianist **KENNY BARRON** through Jan. 21 and with **JOHN CAMPBELL** on Jan. 22. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—The "great savory *pot au feu* called New York" (in the words of Duke Ellington) has loads of West Indian restaurants, but not too many that feature the likes of mellow-toned guitarist (and Ellington favorite) **KENNY BURRELL.** He leads his band—a three-guitar quintet—Jan. 17-22. **JAY MC SHANN,** a blues-minded pianist who arrived in New York from Kansas City forty-seven years ago with a big band that included Charlie Parker, brings in a quintet on Jan. 24. Music from nine-thirty.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a small, well-upholstered room decorated with quaint Marcel Vertès murals (a nude at her easel, a leaping poodle), is a place where time pretty much stands still. **GEORGE SHEARING,** the London-born pianist famous for his cool, light touch and his bons mots and the jaunty way he sings "You're the Pits" ("like the late ZaSu, you're the pits"), holds forth at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. The dancers are young, old, semi-pro, one hundred per cent amateur, happy, earnest, in love; shoe styles (men's) run from white bucks to clodhoppers to streamlined patent-leather jobs. The New York Swing Dance Society organizes these meetings, and on Jan. 22 it brings in an eighteen-piece band led by **AL COBBS** (a trombonist and arranger who worked with Lunceford and Armstrong in the forties) and **HOWARD JOHNSON** (a saxophonist and pianist whose first big job was with Benny Carter, sixty years ago). Music from eight to midnight.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A long, rambling bar and restaurant with a white-trash-chicken-shack theme. The decorator went kind of hog-wild with all the old filling-station and soft-drink signs and the collection of hubcaps and the dime-store portrait of the King and the display of dozer caps and the shingle from the taxidermist in Spanish Fort, Alabama—but it's a friendly enough place. There's live music most nights, including gospel on Mondays, zydeco on Thursdays, and country (with **KRISTI ROSE & THE MIDNIGHT WALKERS**) on Fridays. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish bar in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. The back room, which is trimmed with sea-

NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

worthy things, has Celtic music on Fridays and native string-band sounds on Saturdays. Banjo ace and ex-Blue Grass Boy **BILL KEITH** leads a group on Jan. 21. Music from nine.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or head-room in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. Guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE,** a fleet and subtle impressionist, is here with a quartet Jan. 17-22. **MOSE ALLISON,** a Mississippi-born, Long Island-based pianist and singer whose music (most of it blues-rooted) is dry and philosophical and backwoods hip, comes in for a week starting Jan. 24. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. The pianists who pass through here are among Gotham's finest. **BARRY HARRIS,** a bebop player who came to New York from Detroit in 1960, leads a trio Jan. 17-22; **TOMMY FLANAGAN,** another former Detroiter, begins a six-night visit on Jan. 24. Music from eight-thirty on Mondays, from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight Fridays and Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

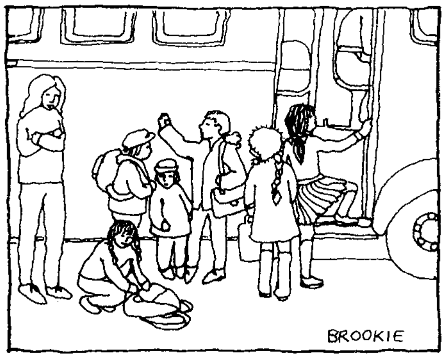
KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor retreat that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and unadvanced rock, medicinal teas, medicinal beer, and space to think your thoughts in. A piano festival is in progress. Among the pianists are **STEVE NIEVE** (Elvis Costello's keyboard man, who made an album of rags and quasi-classical bagatelles a few years ago) on Jan. 18-19; **MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS** (with a quartet) on Jan. 20; **AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS** (with a quartet) on Jan. 21; and **ANDREW HILL** (with a sextet) starting Jan. 25. Music after nine.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). On Jan. 20, **JOHNNY PAYCHECK,** who has a fine old throaty country voice, sings his songs about working, hell-raising, loving, cheating, doing time, growing old, and leaning on Jesus. Music after nine. Hot vittles.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned establishment. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician cat tools around in. The inside features some stuff you probably wouldn't find in a county-line roadhouse—like a wallful of de-luxe Gibson guitars—and some you might expect to find: beer, neon beer signs, and men wearing dozer caps. **BO DIDDLEY,** a rock-and-roll Nestor who once described himself (in his 1959 "Story of Bo Diddley," which moves along in cheerful bump-and-grind fashion and is full of wild laughter) as "a mess . . . a killer-diller," has the floor on Jan. 19. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Henry VIII and a unicorn on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and a comedian named Larry Miller on the podium. His sets start at nine and eleven Jan. 17-21. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. The **DEAD MILKMEN,** four Philadelphians who eke out a living by making fun of art-rock clubhoppers ("You'll Dance to Anything") and Elvis worshippers and other religious groups, make their annual winter visit to this spa on Jan. 20. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.



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SPO-DEE-O-DEE, 565 W. 23rd St., at Eleventh Ave. (206-1990)—A curious mixture of swank and down-home. (The name comes from the 1949 Stick McGhee song "Drinkin' Wine, Spo-dee-o-dee," a piece of rowdiness that was Atlantic Records' first hit.) The food is barbecue, the music is mainly R. & B., the chandeliers are big, and the sofas are king-size. Shows tend to start around eleven.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Three musicians steeped in the mysteries of hard bop—pianist **CEDAR WALTON,** bassist **RON CARTER,** and drummer **BILLY HIGGINS** —will be in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) Tuesdays through Sundays. The electrified big band that the late Gil Evans brought here on Mondays—it shimmered a little and rumbled a lot, while Evans, a hands-off conductor, let his soloists blow at length—is now under the direction of his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and is again in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room, **JIM MORRIS,** a takeoff artist who specializes in Presidents and anchormen and lesser panjandrums in the government-media complex, gives Inaugural Weekend shows at nine and eleven Jan. 20-21. Musical accompaniment by the **WIDESPREAD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** (billed, for the occasion, as the Widespread Disaster Orchestra).

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **MINGUS DYNASTY,** a ghost band overseen by the bassist's widow and led by trombonist **JIMMY KNEPPER,** performs the Master's "Pithecanthropus Erectus" (a tone poem in which, as Knepper once described it, you can see man emerging from, and sinking back into, the slime), "E's Flat Ah's Flat Too," and other unquiet works. **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI,** a tiny French-born pianist with a dazzling style, arrives with his trio on Jan. 24. Mondays are prime time for **MEL LEWIS'S** big band. Music from ten.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Pianist **PETER MALINVERNI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** are on duty through Jan. 21; guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** joins Mr. Moore on Jan. 22. Music weeknights from eight, and Sundays from seven.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

CHERYL GOLDSLEGER—Recent paintings and drawings of imaginary architectural spaces filled with folding chairs. Through Feb. 4. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

LE CORBUSIER (1887-1965)—Drawings. Through Feb. 25. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

ALFRED H. MAURER (1868-1932) / **DARRYL HUGHTO**—Cubist paintings. Through Feb. 27. / Paintings from the past thirteen years, ranging in style from abstract to figurative. Through Jan. 28. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

GEORGE MCNEIL—Recent Expressionist paintings. Through Feb. 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

AVNER MORIAH—A series of paintings based on the Garden of Eden, as well as the artist's more familiar canvases documenting violence in the Middle East. Through Feb. 4. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

THEODORE ROSZAK (1907-81) and **CLARENCE H. CARTER**—Paintings and drawings by each artist. Through Feb. 25. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

MILTON AVERY (1893-1965)—Oil and watercolor figure studies of the artist's wife and daughter. Through Jan. 31. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

RONNI BOGAEV—Realist paintings of flower arrangements and interiors. Through Jan. 28. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

ROSEMARIE CASTORO—Figurative sculptures in stainless steel; the copper-colored patina on some of them was done with a torch. Through Jan. 31. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

PHILIPPE FAVIER—Paintings on irregularly shaped glass, turned around so that the mediums (enamels and pigmented cold ceramic glazes) are seen through the glass. Through Feb. 4. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

PATRICIA TOBACCO FORRESTER / **ROGER WINTER**—Floral watercolors. / Playgrounds in Central Park are one of the subjects of this painter, who uses a Pointillist technique. Through Feb. 1. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

HELEN FRANKENTHALER / **HANS HOFMANN** (1880-1966)—New paintings. Through Jan. 28. / Paintings dating from the late forties. Through Feb. 18. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

ROBERT GWATHMEY (1903-88)—Still-lifes. Through Jan. 28. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

EVA HESSE (1936-70) / **JOAN NELSON**—Reliefs. / Oil paintings on wood. Through Jan. 28. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

GEROME KAMROWSKI—Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist works from the forties. Through Feb. 4. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

ROCKWELL KENT (1882-1971)—Paintings, drawings, prints, and ceramics. Through Feb. 4. (ACA, 41 E. 57th St.)

ALUN LEACH-JONES—Recent abstract paintings. Through Feb. 18. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St.)

JAMES MCGARRELL—New allegorical paintings. Through Jan. 28. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

JAMES MOORE—Trompe-l'oeil compositions that pair objects with wrinkled linen. Through Jan. 28. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

JULES PASCIN (1885-1930)—Prints, and a few drawings. Through Jan. 21. (Fitch-Febvrel, 5 E. 57th St.)

VICTOR PASMORE—New abstract paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

IRVING PETLIN—Pastel drawings of amorphous figures in surreal landscapes, mostly; the works were done between 1961 and this year. Through Jan. 28. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

MARIANNE SCHNELL—Semi-abstract paintings derived from leaf and plant configurations. Through Jan. 21. (Gallery 84, at 50 W. 57th St.)

KARL SCHRAG—Landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits. Through Feb. 8. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

HARRIET SHORR—New large-scale still-lifes. Through Jan. 31. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

ESPHYR SLOBODKINA—Paintings, constructions, and sculptures spanning this abstractionist's career. Through Feb. 1. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)

SIDNEY JANIS FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY—Pairings of

Giacometti with Mondrian and Arp with Léger in a tribute to the recently retired dealer who pioneered the two-artist exhibition. Through March 11. (110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—A two-part show (of five American and five Swiss post-minimalists) that has travelled from museums in Aarau and Lausanne. Through Feb. 10. (City Gallery, 2 Columbus Circle. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays. . . . ¶ Swiss Institute, 35 W. 67th St. Mondays through Fridays, 2 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 2 to 6.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Conrad Atkinson—New "front-page" paintings, in which the artist offers his version of such publications as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Village Voice*. Also, sculptures. Through Feb. 4. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Walter Darby Bannard—New abstract paintings. Through Jan. 28. (Greenberg Wilson, 560 Broadway.)

Robert Barry—Three shows of new paintings: through Jan. 28 at Castelli (578 Broadway) and Pretto (251 Sixth Ave., at Houston St.; opens at 1), and through Feb. 4 at Holly Solomon (724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.; open Mondays).

Rosemarie Beck—Recent figurative paintings based on themes from Yeats and Ovid. Through Feb. 4. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Arthur Cohen—Abstract paintings on shaped canvases. Through Feb. 11. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)—Lithographs. Through Jan. 31. (Zarre, 379 West Broadway.)

Norris Embry (1921-81)—Expressionist paintings and works on paper. Through Jan. 28. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

John Ferren (1905-70)—Nonobjective paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 2. (Perlow, 560 Broadway.)

Yoshishige Furukawa—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through Feb. 11. (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Richard Haas—Drawings, models, maquettes, and prints documenting trompe-l'oeil murals the artist has undertaken during the last seven years. Through Feb. 4. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Nancy Haynes—New abstract paintings on wood and linen. Through Feb. 4. (Good, 532 Broadway.)

James Hayward—Thickly painted canvases, many of which are divided up into three or four solid fields of color. Through Feb. 4. (M-13, at 72 Greene St.)

Michael Hurson—Paintings and drawings. Through Jan. 21. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Per Kirkeby—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through Feb. 8. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

Barbara Kruger—New photographic works. Through Jan. 28. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Ronnie Landfield—Abstract paintings vaguely suggestive of landscapes. Through Feb. 8. (Haller, 415 West Broadway.)

Dennis Oppenheim—For this show, the Gibson Gallery has been transformed into a sort of surrealistic playroom, with such diversions as a pair of bass drums that sound off for no apparent reason and a welding mask that circles endlessly on an electric train. Through Feb. 4. (568 Broadway.)

Richard Pettibone—Sculptures, and paintings offering advice such as "Read Ezra Pound Quick." Through Feb. 4. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Alexis Rockman—Fantastic and rather grim paintings of snakes, rats, and deer. Through Jan. 28. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

Carol Ross—Wall constructions painted with decorative geometric designs. Through Jan. 28. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

Keith Sonnier—Two shows. Late-sixties constructions incorporating such materials as cheesecloth, rubber, and wire mesh at Gladstone, 99 Greene St. . . . ¶ New aluminum-and-neon pieces at Castelli, 420 West Broadway. Both shows through Jan. 28.

Theodoros Stamos—Large paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Dorsky, 578 Broadway.)

Julie Wachtel—New multipanel works by an artist who juxtaposes oil paintings of cartoon characters with silk screens of celebrities. The cartoon characters are borrowed from greeting cards and the celebrities are out of the pages of *People*. Through Feb. 8. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At **Art 54**, 54 Greene St.: Paintings, drawings, and sculptures by Sarah Plimpton, Fritz Bultman, Cecile Muhlstein, Peter Begley, and others. Through Feb. 5. (Open Sundays.) . . . **Sonnabend**, 420 West Broadway: Jannis Kounellis, Robert Morris, and Robert Rauschenberg are showing new pieces. Through Jan. 28.

OTHER GALLERIES

Power Boothe—Recent abstract canvases by an artist who creates a blizzard of strokes by scratching through the paint with the handle of a brush. Through Jan. 28. (Souyun Yi, 249 Centre St.)

Mia Westerlund Roosen—Two floor sculptures made of concrete disks wrapped in sheets of lead. Through Feb. 2. (Burgin, 270 Lafayette St.)

P.S. 1—Can a baroque-era theatrical concept serve twentieth-century art-exhibition purposes? The answer may be found in "Theatergarden Bestiarium," a floor-wide installation of commissioned works by thirteen artists, which includes fountains, a gazebo, a lawn, a mirrored grotto, and films. Through March 12. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Patrick Bailly-Maître-Grand and Irving Pobboravsky—Works by two contemporary daguerreotypists. Through Feb. 2. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

John Coplans—Views of the artist's hands. Through Feb. 11. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Elliott Erwitt—A retrospective comprising some hundred and fifty prints. Through March 12. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Oliver Gagliani—A retrospective. Through Feb. 18. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

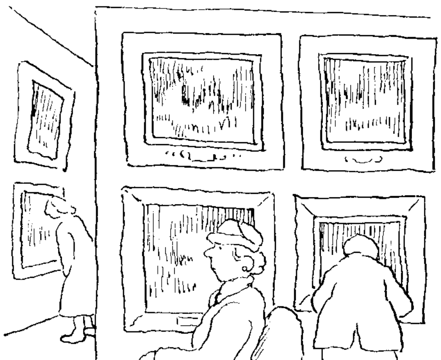
Larry Johnson—Large photographic works incorporating texts. Through Feb. 4. (303 Gallery, temporarily at 127 Spring St.)

David LaChapelle—Cibachromes of nudes. Through Jan. 28. (Trabia-MacAfee, 54 Greene St.)

Herbert List (1903-75)—Surrealist-influenced prints spanning the artist's career. Through Jan. 28. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Eve Sonneman—Polaroid photograms. Through Feb. 2. (Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Group Show—Pictures of gardens by twenty-five photographers, including André Kertész, Elliott Erwitt, Carmen Quesada, and Sylvia Plachy. Through Feb. 15. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)



MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The Georgia O'Keeffe exhibit. Through Feb. 5. . . . ¶ A show of Sienese Renaissance paintings and manuscript illuminations, including sets of narrative panel paintings which were split up long ago. Among the reunited works are six panels from the altarpiece commissioned from Sassetta by the wool merchants' guild. Through March 19. . . . ¶ All the Ingres works in the collections (ten paintings, twenty-two drawings, and seven prints) have been put on view. Through March 19. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute is exhibiting eighty-five outfits from the Victorian era. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A show of Walker Evans photographs, most of which appeared in the recently reissued book "American Photographs." Starts Jan. 19. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Paintings and sculptures that represent all the major art movements since the forties, from Abstract Expressionism to Neo-Expressionism. Through Jan. 22, after which the museum will be closed for three weeks. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of works by Frederick Kiesler (1890-1965), an architect and designer of gallery exhibitions, theatrical sets, and department-store windows. Reconstructed here is his 1942 Surrealist room, designed for Peggy Guggenheim's gallery Art of This Century, in which the objects on view could be touched. Starts Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of nearly ninety paintings by Gustave Courbet. Through Jan. 16. . . . ¶ A display of lacquerware from China, Japan, Korea, and Iran. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—The new Hall of South American Peoples opens on Jan. 20 and reconstructs life before the arrival of Europeans from two perspectives. Archeological remains (carved-and-painted ceramic vessels, gold masks) represent Andean rituals, and ethnographic materials illustrate the everyday routines of Amazonian Indian tribes. Each section is also enhanced by models, including an Incan city that was unearthed in the sixties, and five different thatched-palm huts. There are twenty-three hundred objects in all. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An exhibit of furniture and decorative arts in the William and Mary style on loan from numerous collections, chiefly those of Windsor Castle; the Rijksmuseum, in Amsterdam; the Bibliothèque Nationale of France; and the Winterthur Museum. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—An exhibition of the type of lacquered wood carving called Kamakurabori, historically used for Buddhist temple decorations and currently used for household items. Starts Jan. 18. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—The golem—a figure in Jewish folklore comparable to Frankenstein's monster—has appealed to artists and writers since at least the sixteenth century and, as this survey makes clear, continues to fascinate today's painters, sculptors, and illustrators, among them Saul Steinberg, Charles Simonds, and Louise Fishman. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8,

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART–Cont'd

with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—An exhibit of drawings and watercolors that cover the whole range of subjects (landscapes, portraiture, genre scenes) favored by German Romanticism, which flourished between 1780 and 1850. Caspar David Freidrich, Philipp O. Runge, and Adolph Menzel are among the artists. Through Jan. 29. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A survey of works by Christian Boltanski, a French artist whose sculptures are like time capsules from childhood. Some of the installations are mounted in darkened galleries, evoking the dimness of the past; one is lighted only by six small clamp-on lamps, which focus directly on photographic portraits of high-school students at the Lycée Chases in 1931. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Collage paintings by Benny Andrews, dating from the fifties through the seventies. Through Feb. 26. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Jan. 16 at 8: A new production of Bartók's "Bluebeard's Castle," on a double bill with the Met's première of Schoenberg's "Erwartung." Jessye Norman will sing in both works and James Levine will conduct. (A nonsubscription concert.) . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 8: "Il Trovatore," with Aprile Millo, Fiorenza Cossotto, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 8: "Aida," with Leona Mitchell, Stefania Toczyska, Vladimir Popov, and Alain Fondary; Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8: "Die Fledermaus," with Barbara Daniels, Erie Mills, Helga Dernesch, Allan Glassman, and Håkan Hagegård; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle" and "Erwartung." Both with Jessye Norman, and both conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 1:30: "Il Trovatore," with Aprile Millo, Fiorenza Cossotto, Luciano Pavarotti, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 8: "Aida," with Leona Mitchell, Stefania Toczyska, Vladimir Popov, and Alain Fondary; Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 8: "Die Fledermaus," with Barbara Daniels, Erie Mills, Helga Dernesch, Allan Glassman, and Håkan Hagegård; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "Il Trovatore," with Silvia Mosca, Mignon Dunn, Lando Bartolini, Sherrill Milnes, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle" and "Erwartung." Both with Jessye Norman, and both conducted by James Levine.

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 17 at 7:30: Felix Kruglikov conducting a Brahms-Schumann-Prokofiev program, with Ivan Moravec, piano. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8; Jan. 20 at 2; and Jan. 21 and Jan. 24 at 8: Zubin Mehta conducting music by Paine, Mozart, and Beethoven. With Julia Varady, soprano, and Malcolm Frager, piano.

Louisville Orchestra—Lawrence Leighton Smith conducting contemporary works, with Elmar Oliveira, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 19 at 8.)

Johann Strauss Orchestra of Vienna—Alfred Eschwe conducting "Viennese favorites." (Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 25 at 8.)

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Mannes Orchestra—Larry Newland conducting. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. Jan. 19 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Leopold Hager conducting an all-Baroque program, with Kevin McMillan, baritone. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 21 at 8.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducting works by Gounod, Ravel, and Mendelssohn. With Stephen Hough, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 23 at 8.)

On Original Instruments Chamber Orchestra—Malcolm Bilson conducting the first performance of this augmented version of his chamber group. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 25 at 8.)

RECITALS

American String Quartet—Playing Mozart and Brahms, and the première of George Tsontakis's Quartet No. 4. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 17 at 8.)

Washington Square Contemporary Music Series—Instrumentalists and a vocalist performing works by John Adams, Josef Alexander, Barbara Jazwinski, and others. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Jan. 17 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Borodin Trio—In a Haydn-Shostakovich-Tchaikovsky program. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 18 at 8.)

Paul Green—Clarinet, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 18 at 8.)

Art of the Early Keyboard—Gwendolyn Toth, harpsichord, and guest artists in the first in a series of three concerts, this one featuring the music of Bach and Telemann. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Jan. 18 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Playing works by Haydn, Elliott Carter, and Beethoven in a concert postponed from Oct. 18. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Jan. 18 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.) . . . ¶ Music by Beethoven, Hindemith, and Franck. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Jan. 21 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

Cleveland String Quartet—In the second of three all-Bartók programs. With assisting artists. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 19 at 8.)

Waverly Consort—Singing madrigals, motets, and chansons. (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 19 and Jan. 21 at 8.)

Sylvan Winds—With Kenneth Cooper, piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 19 at 8.)

New York University Chamber Music Society—Presenting Ronald Sadoff, piano, and other instrumentalists in a program of contemporary works. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 19 at 8.)

Alaria Chamber Ensemble—Playing works by Frescobaldi, Purcell, Telemann, Brahms, and others. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 20 at 8.)

Kremer, Bik, Zimmermann, Demenga, Posch—Gidon, Annette, Tabea, Thomas, and Alois playing, respectively, violin, violin, viola, cello, and double bass. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 21 at 8.)

Franciscan String Quartet—In a Mozart-Britten-Dvořák program. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Jan. 22 at 2. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.) . . . ¶ Music by Haydn, George Rochberg, and Schumann. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Jan. 24 at 8.)

Consort of Musicke—A lutenist, a soprano, and a double bassist, in works by John Blow and Henry Purcell. (Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. 923-3700. Jan. 22 at 3.)

John Solum—Flute, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 22 at 3.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Lukas Foss, piano; Ida Kavafian, violin; Cynthia Phelps, viola; David Shifrin, clarinet; and artists of the society playing, among other works, Mr. Foss's composition "Tashi." (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 22 at 5, and Jan. 24 at 7:30.) . . . **note:** The same program will be performed at the Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster St., on Jan. 21 at 6. Tickets at the door one hour before the concert.

New York New Music Ensemble—In a program that includes the première of Tod Machover's "Toward the Center," a piece composed for the highest of high-tech computers. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Jan. 23 at 8.)

Seymour Lipkin—Piano. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Jan. 24 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

Galina Heifetz—Violin, with assisting artists. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Jan. 25 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Musical Elements—Playing works by Paul Moravec, Mel Powell, George Rochberg, and others. With Joan Heller, soprano. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 25 at 8.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. San Antonio Spurs, Jan. 16 at 1. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. San Antonio Spurs, Jan. 17 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Denver Nuggets, Jan. 24 at 7:30.

Football—*Super Bowl XXIII: Cincinnati Bengals vs. San Francisco Forty-Niners.* (Miami. Jan. 22.)

Hockey—At **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Jan. 17 at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Los Angeles Kings, Jan. 19 at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Minnesota North Stars, Jan. 21 at 7:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Devils, Jan. 24 at 8:05. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Quebec Nordiques, Jan. 19 at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Minnesota North Stars, Jan. 23 at 7:45.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30.

Trotting—At **yonkers raceway:** Weeknights at 8. . . . **meadowlands:** Nightly at 7:30.

ET ALIA

Claire Bloom—Reciting portions of Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" and "A Room of One's Own." (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Jan. 20 at 8.)

National Boat Show—The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat; the other beautiful boats in the world are at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. (Eleventh Ave. between 34th and 39th Sts. Jan. 16, from 11 to 9; Jan. 17-20, from noon to 9; Jan. 21, from 10 to 10; and Jan. 22, from 11 to 7.)

Winter Antiques Show—Seventy-four dealers have been invited to display their goods at the thirty-fifth annual show. A benefit for the East Side House Settlement. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Mondays through Saturdays 11 to 9, and Sundays 1 to 6; from Jan. 21 to Jan. 29.)

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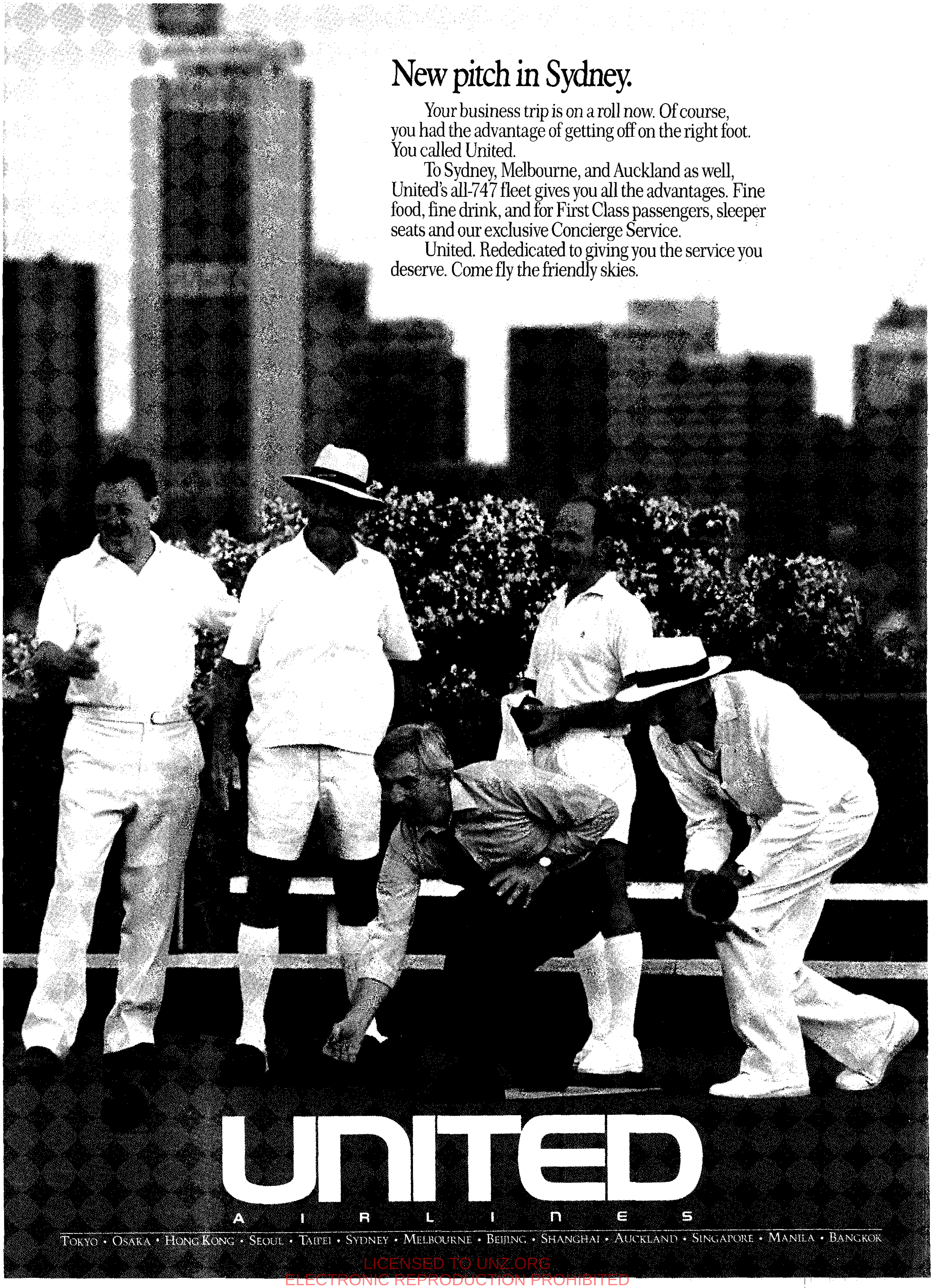

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Jan. 19: "Comrades" (directed by Bill Douglas).
Jan. 20: "Memories of Prison" (1984; Nelson Pereira dos Santos; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese).
Jan. 21 at 4:30: "The Singing Detective" (Jon Amiel), with Michael Gambon. The seven-hour British television series, shown complete at one sitting, with an intermission.
From Jan. 22: "Memories of Prison."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 3: "Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Beaches" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Twins" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rain Man" (Barry Levinson), with Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Working Girl" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Tequila Sunrise" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Running on Empty" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Another Woman" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.
Theatre 2: "The January Man" (Pat O'Connor), with Kevin Kline.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Boost" (Harold Becker), with James Woods and Sean Young.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 2: "Deepstar Six" (Sean S. Cunningham).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Talk Radio" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (Barry Levinson), with Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Twins" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 2: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Tequila Sunrise" (†).
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 17.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 24: A program of six new films from Europe, the Soviet Union, and Taiwan. The schedule of showings is complicated; our best advice is to phone the theatre for titles and times. From Jan. 25: "Peking Opera Blues" (1986; directed by Tsui Hark; in Cantonese).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560).
Theatre 1: "Wings of Desire" ("Der Himmel über Berlin") (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 19: (Separate admissions) "A Forgotten Tune for the Flute" (1987; Eldar Ryazanov; in Russian); and "Friendship's Death" (Peter Wollen). From Jan. 20: "Friendship's Death."

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "Talk Radio" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Tequila Sunrise" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Law of Desire" (†) and "What Have I Done to Deserve This!" (†).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Thin Blue Line" (†).
Theatre 4: "Matador" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "The January Man" (Pat O'Connor), with Kevin Kline.
Theatre 3: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Beaches" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Talk Radio" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through Jan. 19: "Another Woman" (†).
From Jan. 20: "Field of Honor" (Jean-Pierre Denis; in French and Alsatian).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Dressmaker" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Last Temptation of Christ" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Rain Man" (Barry Levinson), with Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Pelle the Conqueror" (†).
Theatre 2: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair, in Hindi).
Theatre 3: "36 Fillette" (Catherine Breillat; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Working Girl" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The January Man" (Pat O'Connor), with Kevin Kline.
Theatre 2: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.
Theatre 2: "Madame Sousatzka" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Deepstar Six" (Sean S. Cunningham).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tequila Sunrise" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 19: "Purgatory." From Jan. 20: "Crime Zone."
Theatre 4: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 5: "Deepstar Six" (directed by Sean S. Cunningham).
Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 4: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Hellbound: Hellraiser II" (Tony Randel).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "The January Man" (Pat O'Connor), with Kevin Kline.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

West Side Cinema I and 2, 7th Ave. between 47th and 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Jan. 16: "Mutiny on the Bounty" (1935; directed by Frank Lloyd), with Charles Laughton, Franchot Tone, and Clark Ga-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

ble; and "Rembrandt" (1936; Alexander Korda), with Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Gertrude Lawrence.

Jan. 17-18: "Payment Deferred" (1932; Lothar Mendes), with Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Ray Milland; and "Sidewalks of London" (1938; Tim Whelan), with Vivien Leigh and Charles Laughton.

Jan. 19-21: "The Night of the Hunter" (†) and "Witness for the Prosecution" (†).

Jan. 22-23: "Hobson's Choice" (†) and "The Paradine Case" (†).

Jan. 24-25: "The Canterville Ghost" (†); and "Young Bess" (1953; George Sidney), with Jean Simmons, Stewart Granger, Deborah Kerr, and Charles Laughton.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Jan. 17: "Kagemusha" ("The Shadow Warrior"; 1980; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai.

Jan. 18-19: "1900" (1977; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Robert De Niro, Burt Lancaster, Donald Sutherland, Dominique Sanda, Sterling Hayden, and Gérard Depardieu.

Jan. 20-21: "Trash" (1970; Paul Morrissey), with Joe Dallesandro and Holly Woodlawn; and "Heat" (1972; Paul Morrissey), with Sylvia Miles and Joe Dallesandro.

Jan. 22: "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (1982; Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian), with Omero Antonutti; and "Entre Nous" (1983; Diane Kurys; in French), with Isabelle Huppert, Miou-Miou, Guy Marchand, and Jean-Pierre Bacri.

Jan. 23-24: "Two for the Road" (†); and "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961; Blake Edwards), with Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney.

From Jan. 25: "The Conformist" (†); and "The Last Metro" (1981; François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Jan. 16: "Jewel Robbery" (1932; William Dieterle), with William Powell and Kay Francis; "Remember Last Night?" (1935; James Whale), with Robert Young and Edward Arnold; and "The Worst Woman in Paris?" (1933; Monta Bell), with Adolphe Menjou, Benita Hume, and Harvey Stephens.

Jan. 17: "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum" (1933; Lewis Milestone), with Al Jolson and Harry Langdon; and "Central Park" (1932; John G. Adolfi), with Joan Blondell, Wallace Ford, and Guy Kibbee.

Jan. 18: "Platinum Blonde" (1931; Frank Capra), with Jean Harlow, Robert Williams, Loretta Young, Claude Allister, and Halliwell Hobbes; and "Three Wise Girls" (1932; William Beaudine), with Jean Harlow and Mae Clarke.

Jan. 19: "Gabriel Over the White House" (1933; Gregory La Cava), with Walter Huston, Karen Morley, and Franchot Tone; and "The Dark Horse" (1932; Alfred E. Green), with Guy Kibbee, Bette Davis, and Warren William.

Jan. 20: "Call Her Savage" (1932; John Francis Dillon), with Clara Bow and Gilbert Roland; and "Hoopla" (1933; Frank Lloyd), with Clara Bow.

Jan. 21: "Twentieth Century" (1934; Howard Hawks), with John Barrymore, Carole Lombard, and Ralph Forbes; and "Theodora Goes Wild" (1936; Richard Boleslavsky), with Irene Dunne and Melvyn Douglas.

Jan. 22: "Murder at the Vanities" (1934; Mitchell Leisen), with Victor McLaglen and Jack Oakie; and "Here Is My Heart" (1935; Frank Tuttle), with Bing Crosby and Roland Young.

Jan. 23: "The Life of Jimmy Dolan" (1933; Alfred E. Green), with Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Loretta Young; and "The Little Giant" (1933; Roy Del Ruth), with Edward G. Robinson and Mary Astor.

Jan. 24: "One Night of Love" (1934; Victor Schertzinger), with Grace Moore; and "Pennies from Heaven" (1936 †).

Jan. 25: "Black Legion" (†); "The St. Louis Kid" (1934; Ray Enright), with James Cagney; and "Star Witness" (1931; William Wellman), with Walter Huston.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Jan. 16: "You Can't Have Everything" (1937; Norman Taurog), with Alice Faye, Don Ameche, Cesar Romero, and the Ritz Brothers; and "My Gal Sal" (1942; Irving Cummings), with Rita Hayworth and Victor Mature.

Jan. 17: "Killer's Kiss" (1955; Stanley Kubrick), with Frank Silvera; and "Pickup on South Street" (1953; Samuel Fuller), with Richard Widmark, Jean Peters, and Thelma Ritter.

Jan. 18: "All Through the Night" (1942; Vincent Sherman), with Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre, and Conrad Veidt; and "The Chase" (1946; Arthur Ripley), with Robert Cummings, Michèle Morgan, and Peter Lorre.

Jan. 19: "Marat/Sade" (1967; Peter Brook), performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company; and "Pound" (1970; Robert Downey).

Jan. 20-21: "Montenegro" (1981; Dusan Makavejev), with Susan Anspach and Erland Josephson; and "The Beast" (1975; Walerian Borowczyk; in French), with Sirpa Lane.

Jan. 22: "The Moon in the Gutter" (1983; Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Nastassia Kinski; and "Invitation au Voyage" (1983; Peter Del Monte; in French).

Jan. 23: "That Night in Rio" (†) and "Weekend in Havana" (†).

Jan. 24: "Bob le Flambeur" (1955; Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Isabel Corey and Roger Duchesne; and "Doulos—The Finger Man" (1962; Jean-Pierre Melville; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Serge Reggiani.

Jan. 25: "Mr. Moto in Danger Island" (1939; Herbert I. Leeds), with Peter Lorre; "Mr. Moto Takes a Vacation" (1939; Norman Foster), with Peter Lorre; and "My Favorite Brunette" (1947; Elliott Nugent), with Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, and Peter Lorre.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 16: "Amarcord" (1974; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Bruno Zanin; and "The Conformist" (†).

Jan. 17: "Whistle Down the Wind" (1961; Bryan Forbes), with Hayley Mills and Alan Bates; and "The Spirit of the Beehive" (1973; Victor Erice; in Spanish).

Jan. 18: "The Gang's All Here" (1943; Busby Berkeley), with Alice Faye, James Ellison, Carmen Miranda, and Charlotte Green-

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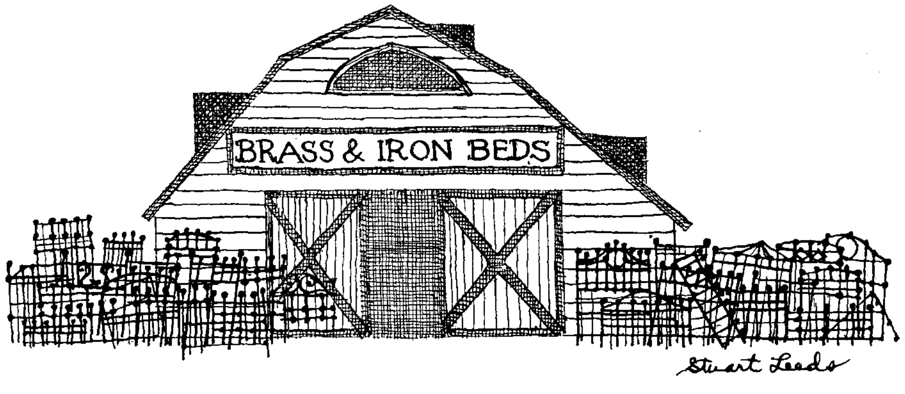

wood; and "Greenwich Village" (1944; Walter Lang), with Carmen Miranda, Don Ameche, and William Bendix.

Jan. 19: "Performance" (1970; Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg), with Mick Jagger and James Fox; and "Don't Look Now" (†).

Jan. 20-21: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972; Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "The Men" (†).

Jan. 22: "Dangerous" (†); and "Dancing Lady" (1933; Robert Z. Leonard), with Fred Astaire, Joan Crawford, Franchot Tone, and Clark Gable.

Jan. 23: "La Bête Humaine" (†) and "La Grande Illusion" (†).

Jan. 24: "Young and Innocent" (†) and "Murder" (†).

Jan. 25: "A Guy Named Joe" (1943; Victor Fleming), with Spencer Tracy and Irene Dunne; and "The Seventh Cross" (1944; Fred Zinnemann), with Spencer Tracy, Signe Hasso, Hume Cronyn, and Jessica Tandy.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

THEATRE 1: Jan. 16 at 2:30: "The Search" (1966; directed by Angelino Fons; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Jacques Perrin. . . . ¶ Jan. 16 at 6: "Peppermint Frappe" (1967; Carlos Saura; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Geraldine Chaplin. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 2:30: "Diamond Plaza" (1982; Francesco Betriu; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Sylvia Munt. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 6: "The Burnt City" (1976; Antoni Ribas; in Catalan, with English subtitles), with Angelina Molina. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 2:30: "Berta's Motives" (1985; José Luis Guerin; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Sylvia Garcia. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 6 and Jan. 20 at 2:30: "Escape from Segovia" (1981; Imanol Uribe; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Xabier Elorriaga. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 6: "Death of a Cyclist" (1955; Juan A. Bardem; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Lucia Bose. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 2: "Tasio" (1984; Montxo Armendariz; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Patxi Bisquert. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 5 and Jan. 22 at 2: "Dark Habits" (1983; Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Carmen Maura. . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 5: "Tasio." . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 2:30: "Death of a Cyclist."

THEATRE 2: Jan. 19 at 2:30 and 6: "This Is Our Home, It Is Not for Sale" (1987; Jon Schwartz), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 2, 4, and 6 and Jan. 21-22 at 1, 3, and 5: Three different programs, each shown once a day, of animated films by Jan Švankmajer. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 6:30: "She Must Be Seeing Things" (1987; Sheila McLaughlin), with Sheila Dabney and Lois Weaver. Miss McLaughlin will be present. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 3 and 6: "Alice" (1987; Jan Švankmajer), an animated and live-action film, with Kristýna Kohoutová.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)

RIKLIS THEATRE: A program of films by Cecil B. De Mille. Jan. 18 at 2:30: "Carmen" (1915), with Geraldine Farrar and Wallace Reid; and "Chimmie Fadden Out West" (1915), with Victor Moore. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 2:30: "The Cheat" (1915), with Fannie Ward and Sessue Hayakawa; and "The Golden Chance" (1915), with Wallace Reid. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 2:30: "Joan the Woman" (1917), with Geraldine Farrar and Wallace Reid. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 7:30: "The Woman God Forgot" (1917), with Geraldine Farrar and Wallace Reid. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 4: "The Whispering Chorus" (1918); and a fragment of "The Devil Stone" (1918), with Geraldine Farrar and Wallace Reid. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 7:30: "Old Wives for New" (1918), with Florence Vidor. . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 1: "Till I Come Back to You" (1918), with Florence Vidor. . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 4: "The Squaw Man" (1918). . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 2:30: "The Woman God Forgot."

WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SCREENING ROOM (Wednesdays through Sundays, continuous showings): Through Jan. 19, the last in a series of six programs of video art, television commercials, and short films, all dealing with feminist issues. . . . ¶ From Jan. 20: "Video and Language: Video as Language."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the **JONAS MEKAS THEATRE** or the **MAYA DEREN THEATRE:** Jan. 17 at 7: "Painters Painting" (1972; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 8: A program of films by Douglass Crockwell. . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 6: "Zvenigora" (1928; Alexander Dovzhenko; a silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 8: "Tough Guys Don't Dance" (1987; Norman Mailer). . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 10: "Point of Order" (1964; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 6: "Girl Shy" (1924; Harold Lloyd and Fred Newmayer; a silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8: A program of films by Marjorie Keller. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8:30: "In the Year of the Pig" (1969; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 8: A second program of films by Marjorie Keller. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 10: "Millhouse: A White Comedy" (1971; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 6: A third program of films by Marjorie Keller. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 8: "Underground" (1976; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 7: "In the King of Prussia" (1982; Emile De Antonio). . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 8: A program of films by Joseph Cornell. . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 9: "Zemlya" (1930; Alexander Dovzhenko). . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 6: "Aerograd" (1935; Alexander Dovzhenko). . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "Manhandled" (1924; Allan Dwan; a silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 9:30: "Committed" (1984; Sheila McLaughlin and Lynne Tillman). . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 6: "Prastankan" (1921; Carl Th. Dreyer; a silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8: "Painters Painting." . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8:30: "Lives of Performers" (1972; Yvonne Rainer).

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—Jan. 16 at 8: "Boudu Saved from Drowning" (1932; Jean Renoir; in French, with English subtitles), with Michel Simon. . . . ¶ Jan. 17 at 8: "Cemil" (1985; Johannes Schafer; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 18 at 8: A program of cartoons by Max and Dave Fleischer and Otto Messmer, and two episodes each of Bosko and Krazy Kat cartoons. . . . ¶ Jan. 19 at 8: "Permanent Vacation" (1980; Jim Jarmusch). . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 8: A program of films by Dominic Angerame and Nina Fonoroff. . . . ¶ Jan. 20 at 10:30: A program of four short animated films by the Brothers Quay. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 8: "Wild Angels" (1966; Roger Corman), with Peter Fonda, Nancy Sinatra, and Bruce Dern. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 10:30: A program of four short animated films by the Brothers Quay. . . . ¶ Jan. 22 at 8: "The Trip" (1967; Roger Corman), with Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, Susan Strasberg, and Bruce Dern. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 8: "Queen of Blood" (1966; Curtis Harrington), with Basil Rathbone and Dennis Hopper. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "De Sade" (1969; Cy Enfield), with Keir Dullea and John Huston. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8: "Sorority Girl" (1957; Roger Corman), with Susan Cabot.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Jan. 20 at 6:30: "The Garden of Women" (1954; Keisuke Kinoshita; in Japanese, with English subtitles), with Hideko Takamine. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 2: "When a Woman Ascends the Stairs" (1960; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese, with English subtitles), with Hideko Takamine.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"AIDS Media: Counter-Representations," a program consisting of four films and eighteen videotapes in five different programs. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for film and time schedules and ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"Television's Greatest Jazz Programs"—Through Jan. 20: Two programs featuring Duke Ellington. . . . Starting Jan. 24: Excerpts from the show "Jazz Casual" (1963). Tuesdays at 2:30 and 5:30, and Wednesdays through Fridays at 2:30. . . . ¶ Starting Jan. 17: A program of six films written by Gabriel García Márquez. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

The Accidental Tourist—With William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, and Geena Davis; directed by Lawrence Kasdan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Murray Hill, Cinema II, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Art Greenwich Twin, 57th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

Another Woman—Woody Allen's (unofficial) version of Ingmar Bergman's "Wild Strawberries" features Gena Rowlands as a firm-minded, judgmental philosophy professor who has just turned fifty. Having taken a year off to write a book, she has rented a workplace, but "reality" leaks through: the voices of an analyst's patients come through an air vent, and she becomes obsessed with the voice of a distraught pregnant woman (Mia Farrow), whose confused feelings awaken her to the risk-taking she has put out of her own fearful, prudent life. She realizes she has missed out on passion, on motherhood, on everything that matters. The picture is meant to be about emotion, but it has no emotion. It's smooth and high-toned; it's polished in its nothingness. The only resonance comes from a few of the performers—especially from Gene Hackman, who comes through with some sexual magnetism, and Sandy Dennis, who lets loose with bursts of smudgy, chaotic anger. The huge cast includes Martha Plimpton, Blythe Danner, Bruce Jay Friedman, Ian Holm, Harris Yulin, Philip Bosco, Kenneth Welsh, Betty Buckley, and John Houseman. Cinematography by Sven Nykvist. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/31/88.) (Plaza. . . . ¶ Carnegie Screening Room; through Jan. 19.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Beaches—With Bette Midler and Barbara Hershey, directed by Garry Marshall. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gramercy, Cinema I, Guild, and Embassy.)

La Bête Humaine (1938)—Jean Renoir's version of the Zola novel, transferred from the Second Empire to the thirties, has a memorable beginning, with Jean Gabin driving the express on the run from Le Havre to Paris. The train sequences, which are superb—realistic yet poetic—were shot on location and include views of the Gare Saint-Lazare in Paris in 1938. The film has marvellous atmosphere and a fine cast (Simone Simon, Carette, Fernand Ledoux, Blanchette Brunoy, Renoir himself), but the material, which involves brutal, uncontrollable passion seen in a social framework, turns oppressive, and at times Gabin is a lump. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 23.)

Black Legion (1936)—In 1936, there were press accounts that a new Klan had sprung up,

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

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selecting Jews, Catholics, and Communists as its targets, and Warners, always eager for topical stories, leaped in. In the movie, the organization is against foreigners in general, and Humphrey Bogart is the young factory worker who joins up in anger because a Pole got the job he wanted. The film is tolerable, but not in a class with the best of the Warners socially conscious melodramas. Archie Mayo directed; with Ann Sheridan, Erin O'Brien-Moore, and Dick Foran. (Film Forum 2; Jan. 25.)

The Canterville Ghost (1944)—In this heavy whimsy taken from an Oscar Wilde story, Charles Laughton is atrociously coy and florid. As the ghost of a man who was a coward, he's doomed to flutter about until his descendant, Robert Young, proves himself brave. With Margaret O'Brien in a prominent part, and Peter Lawford, Una O'Connor, Mike Mazurki, Rags Ragland, and William Gargan. Directed by Jules Dassin, who clearly lacks the requisite light, comic tone (was some executive punishing him?). From a script by Edwin Blum. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 24-25.)

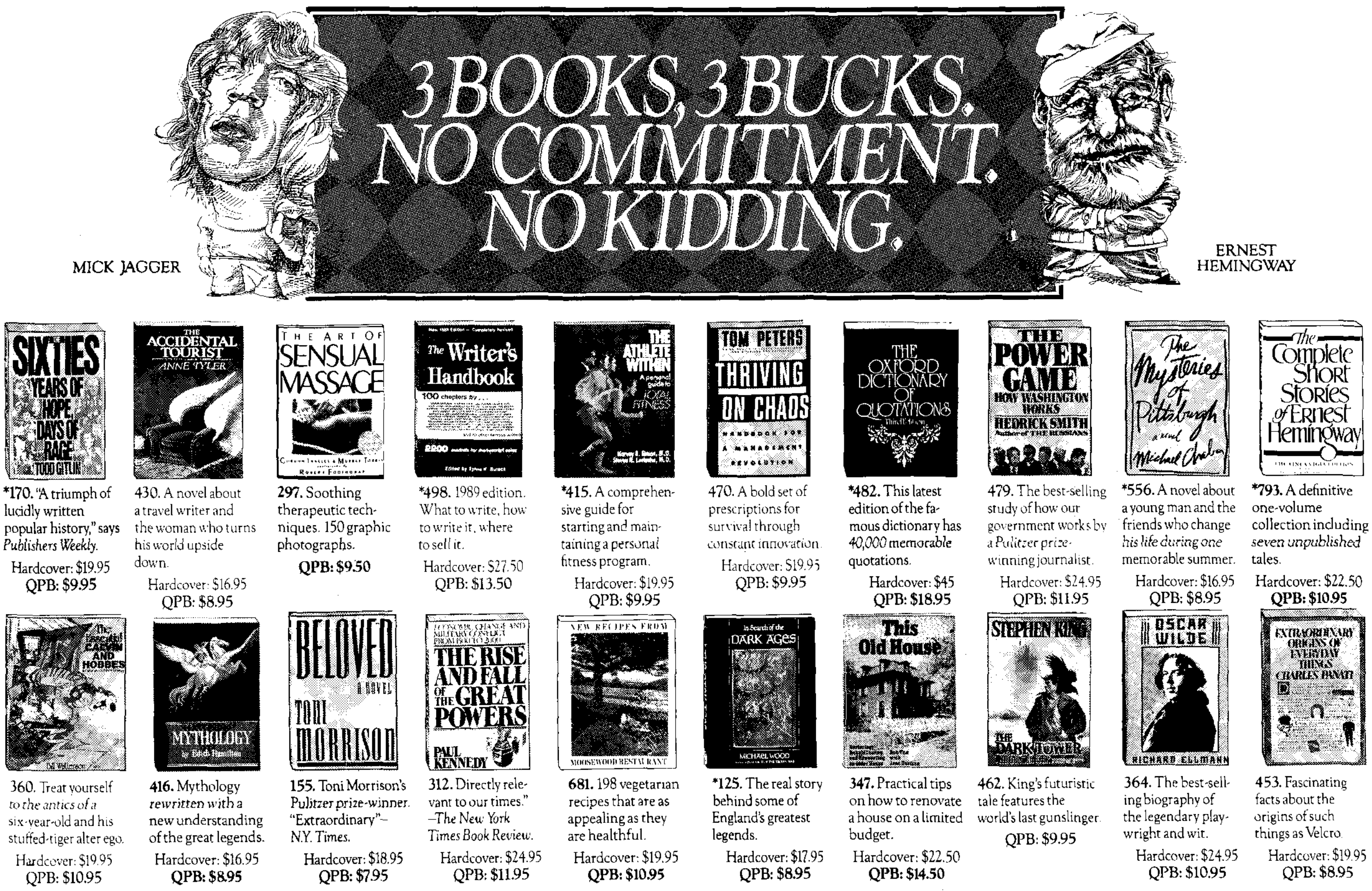
The Conformist (1970)—Bernardo Bertolucci wrote and directed this extraordinarily rich adaptation of the Alberto Moravia novel about an upper-class follower of Mussolini. It's set principally in 1938. Jean-Louis Trintignant, who conveys the mechanisms of thought through tension, the way Bogart did, is the aristocratic Fascist—an intelligent coward who sacrifices everything he cares about because he wants the safety of normality. Stefania Sandrelli is his deliciously corrupt, empty-headed wife, and Dominique Sanda, with her swollen lips and tiger eyes, is the lesbian he would like to run away with. The film succeeds least with its psychosexual approach to the Fascist protagonist, but if the ideas don't touch the imagination, the film's sensuous texture does. It's a triumph of feeling and of style—lyrical, flowing, velvety style, so operatic that you come away with sequences in your head like arias. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro. In Italian. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 16. . . . ¶ Cinema Village; starting Jan. 25.)

Dangerous (1935)—This is the mawkish, trashy movie for which Bette Davis won her first Academy Award; the award was generally considered to be belated recognition of her work the year before in "Of Human Bondage," but, terrible as "Dangerous" is, she hypes it with an intensity that frequently makes you sit up and stare. She plays a self-destructive, hard-drinking actress who is convinced that she jinxes the people she gets involved with. Davis is remarkable in her gone-to-the-dogs barroom scene, and she can be tough and surly, but nobody could do much with the sequences in which she's required to renounce her true love, an architect (Franchot Tone), and sacrifice herself to the mealymouthed husband (John Eldredge) who is crippled for life as a result of her enraged, suicidal driving. (He's such a crawly masochist that she seems to have done him a favor by mutilating him.) Alfred E. Green directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 22.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot. Filmed in France. (1/9/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 68th St. Playhouse, Festival, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels—With Steve Martin and Michael Caine, directed by Frank Oz. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Don't Look Now (1973)—A Daphne du Maurier story of the occult, presented in fast, splintered, almost subliminal imagery. Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland team up wonderfully as parents whose drowned daughter may or may not be sending them messages. The meanings are on a simple Hitchcock level, but the unnerving cold ominousness of the environment (mostly Venice, deserted at the end of the season) says that things are not what they seem. This is the fanciest, most carefully assembled enigma yet put on the screen. Nicolas Roeg is a chillingly chic director; the picture is an example of high-fashion gothic sensibility. Venice, the labyrinthine city of pleasure, with its crumbling, leering gargoyles, is obscurely, frighteningly sensual here, and an early sex sequence with Christie and Sutherland nude in bed, intercut with their postcoital mood as they dress to go out together, has an extraordinary erotic glitter. Using du Maurier as a base, Roeg comes closer to getting Borges on the screen than those who have tried it directly, but there's a distasteful clamminess about the picture. Roeg's style is



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in love with disintegration. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 19.)

The Dressmaker—The whole cast rises to the occasion—a chance to appear in John McGrath's fine adaptation of the 1973 Beryl Bainbridge novel (published here in 1974 as "The Secret Glass"). Joan Plowright as Nellie, the prudish unmarried dressmaker, and Billie Whitelaw as Margo, the widow with a roving eye who works in a munitions factory, are sisters. The setting is Liverpool in 1944, and the plot centers on what happens when sallow, skinny Rita (Jane Horrocks), the seventeen-year-old niece they have raised, falls in love with Wesley (Tim Ransom), a Yank from Mississippi. She's frightened of his hands on her and keeps slapping him away. There's a tinge of comedy in the situation, but there's also a tinge of queasy horror. This good, inexpensive British movie is about morbid respectability, and the director, Jim O'Brien, makes it possible for the actors to create a maze of claustrophobic subtexts. It's doubtful if either Plowright or Whitelaw has ever before been this scarily effective onscreen; Whitelaw's sky-blue eyes stab you—she seems to have become the nakedest of performers. With Peter Postlethwaite, Pippa Hinchley, and Rosemary Martin. (12/12/88) (Paris.)

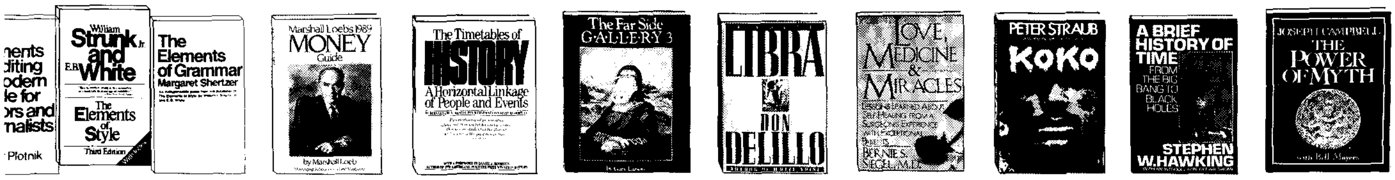
La Grande Illusion (1937)—In form, "La Grande Illusion" is an escape story; yet who would think of it in this way? It's like saying that "Oedipus Rex" is a detective story. Among other things, this film is a study of human needs and the subtle barriers of class among a group of prisoners and their captors during the First World War. The two aristocrats—the German prison commander von Rauffenstein (Erich von Stroheim) and his prisoner the French officer de Boeldieu (Pierre Fresnay)—share a common world of memories and sentiments. Though their class is doomed by the changes that produced the war, they must act out the rituals of noblesse oblige and serve a nationalism they don't believe in. The Frenchman sacrifices his life for men he doesn't really approve of—the plebeian Maréchal (Jean Gabin) and the Jew Rosenthal (Marcel Dalio). Jean Renoir directed this elegy for the death of the old European aristocracy, and it is one of the true masterpieces of the screen. The performances of von Stroheim, Fresnay, and Gabin are in three different styles of acting, and they illuminate one another. With Gabin, you're not aware of any performance; with von Stroheim and Fresnay, you *are*—and you should be: they represent a way of life that is dedicated to superbly controlled outer appearances. Written by Charles Spaak and Renoir; the camerawork is by Christian Matras and Claude Renoir. In French, with the German and English characters speaking in their own languages. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 23.)

Hobson's Choice (1953)—Charles Laughton is superbly vulgar in this whack at the backside of Victorianism. He makes a great vaudeville turn out of the role of an egocentric scoundrel, the prosperous bootmaker who doesn't want to part with his three marriageable daughters because they are too useful as unpaid labor. As the oldest daughter, the spinster in spite of herself, Brenda de Banzie is so "right" that when she marries her father's best workman and puts belching, drunken old Dad out of business, one feels the good old-fashioned impulse to applaud. John Mills is the fortunate young man whom she overpowers. David Lean directed this English comedy, based on the Harold Brighouse play. Cinematography by Jack Hildyard. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 22-23.)

The Last Temptation of Christ—Martin Scorsese's film is based on an intense, rather ponderous novel by Nikos Kazantzakis that portrays Christ as a tormented prophet who has to choose between his human nature and his divine nature—who in order to fulfill his role as redeemer must reject the overpowering temptation to be merely a man. If we respond to anything in this movie it's to the idea of Scorsese wrestling with Kazantzakis's conception, thrashing manfully among the tangles of the novel's dense prose, trying to isolate some clear, intelligible meaning from this religious fever-dream. Scorsese hasn't managed to come up with a consistent visual style for the story, and the movie's intensity, over a span of two hours and forty minutes, is sputtering, fitful. The scenes meant to evoke the natural—the human—side of the story don't have much charge, and most of the actors look uncomfortable. (The drab modern idiom of Paul Schrader's dialogue is at least part of the problem.) This movie isn't a sacrilege; it's just an honorable mistake. With Willem Dafoe as Jesus, Harvey Keitel as Judas, Barbara Hershey as Mary Magdalene, and David Bowie as Pontius Pilate. Peter Gabriel composed the music.—T.R. (9/5/88) (Cinema 3.)

Law of Desire (1987)—One of the rare movies that's sensually exciting and at the same time funny. This flamboyantly glamorous homosexual fantasy by Madrid's gagster-artist Pedro Almodóvar is satirical, romantic, metaphorical; it has wonderful jokes and the exaggerated plot of an absurdist Hollywood melodrama. It doesn't disguise its narcissism; it turns it into bright-colored tragicomedy. Carmen Maura, a powerful actress in the manner of the early Anna Magnani, with the trippiness and self-mockery of Bette Midler, plays Tina, a transsexual who has a hot, roiling temperament. Tina's celebrity brother Pablo (Eusebio Poncela) directs classy homoerotic films. One night, Pablo takes home Antonio (Antonio Banderas), a government minister's son, who has been stalking him; by morning, Antonio loves him, is determined to possess him completely, and refuses to get out of his life. With Miguel Molina, Manuela Velasco, and the male transvestite Bibi Andersen as Tina's lesbian ex-lover. In Spanish. (4/20/87) (Quad Cinema.)

Madame Sousatzka—As a flamboyant, grande-dame piano teacher of Russian lineage, Shirley MacLaine seems to have entered the Simone Signoret sweepstakes, but she doesn't project Signoret's generosity—she doesn't spill over emotionally. This is, arguably, MacLaine's worst performance. She has flurries of physical mannerisms, but she's tight and held in; she's a wacky witch with frizzy red hair; she could be Norma Des-



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

mond's small-town spinster sister. Sousatzka lives in London (in an Edwardian house that is to be demolished) and devotes her energies and her hopes to the most prodigious of her students, a fifteen-year-old Indian boy raised in England—a role played with intelligence and poise by Navin Chowdhry. The blindingly derivative movie is about the boy's breaking free of her, though he knows he'll remain in her debt forever. Directed by John Schlesinger, this is a handsomely mounted production, and the musical community may regard it as a treasure—as the "Red Shoes" of the keyboard. With Peggy Ashcroft, Shabana Azmi, Geoffrey Bayldon, Leigh Lawson, and an appealingly understated performance by Twiggy. The script, by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Schlesinger, is based on the 1962 novel by Bernice Rubens. (10/31/88) (Metro Cinema.)

Matador—Hugely entertaining. Everything is eroticized in this lush, clownish comedy by Pedro Almodóvar. The characters act out their wildest fantasies—or, like the handsome, wealthy young virgin Ángel (Antonio Banderas), try to act them out—and embarrass themselves. Ángel is training to be a bullfighter, but he faints at the sight of blood. He's such a supreme fantasist that he hallucinates and sees what happened in a recent series of murders—unluckily, he's fantasist enough to think that he committed them. It's all sumptuously sick and funny. Assumpta Serna plays a culmination of the scarlet-woman tradition of Joan Crawford, Rita Hayworth, Ava Gardner, and Anouk Aimée—all those flaming man-killers with their too vibrant smiles. And Almodóvar himself appears as a mad-genius couturier who messes up his curly hair before he appears in public. Also with Nacho Martínez, Eusebio Poncela, Carmen Maura, Eva Cobo, Julieta Serrano, and Chus Lampreave. Written by the director and Jesús Ferrero; cinematography by Ángel Luis Fernández. In Spanish. (5/16/88) (Quad Cinema.)

The Men (1950)—Marlon Brando made his first screen appearance as the paraplegic Second World War hero, rebelling furiously and helplessly against his condition; paradoxically, Brando gives an overpoweringly physical performance. He's amazingly sensitive and intense—no one before him who smoldered on screen ever gave off so much heat. Fred Zinnemann directed, with sureness and tact, using the paraplegic patients in a California veterans' hospital as part of the cast. With Jack Webb, Teresa Wright, and Everett Sloane. Produced by Stanley Kramer; conventional melodramatic banalities mar the Carl Foreman script, but it's an economical, vivid narrative. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 20-21.)

Mississippi Burning—Set in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, it opens with a fictionalized re-creation of the murder of the three civil-rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—but it isn't really about the civil-rights movement. The director, Alan Parker, treats Southerners the way he treated the Turks ten years ago in "Midnight Express." And he twists facts here as he did there, with the same apparent objective: to come up with garish forms of violence. Two F.B.I. men (Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe) arrive to find out what happened to the three activists, and a huge manhunt is initiated. The movie hinges on the ploy that the F.B.I. men can't stop the K.K.K. from its terrorism against blacks until they swing over to vigilante tactics. And we're put in the position of applauding the F.B.I.'s dirtiest forms of intimidation. Hackman is superb, and there's impressive work by Frances McDormand, Brad Dourif, Park Overall, Stephen Tobolowsky, and others. But the film is morally repugnant. The script is credited to Chris Gerolmo (Parker says he rewrote it). (12/26/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, and Warner.)

Murder (1930)—A carefully designed early Hitchcock whodunit set among theatre people. It's more languidly paced than his mid-thirties work, and the dialogue is spoken in stage rhythms, but there are inventive moments. Herbert Marshall, dryly amiable in his first talking picture, plays an eminent actor—a knight serving on a jury. Convinced of the innocence of the young actress (Norah Baring) who is on trial for murder, he tries to solve the case in order to save her life. There's an experiment with a stream-of-consciousness monologue, there's an odd, perhaps partly improvised comedy scene involving some children invading Marshall's bedroom, and there's also a tricky sequence in which he listens to "Tristan" on the radio while he shaves. With Miles Mander, Esmé Percy, Donald Calthrop, and Edward Chapman and Phyllis Konstam as the couple in the breakfast scene, and a glimpse of Hitchcock on a street. The screenplay, by Alma Reville, is taken from the stage version of Clemence Dane's novel "Enter Sir John." (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 24.)

Eve Olitsky

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The Naked Gun—An explosion of sixth-grade humor: terrible puns, broad slapstick, crushingly obvious sexual innuendo, a strategically detonated fart . . . The filmmakers (most of whom were also involved in "Airplane!") are low-comedy purists. The movie could be dopier only if it were longer: its stupidity has a relentlessness and a formal rigor that are practically French. (The scrupulous aesthetic consistency also extends to the cinematography and the editing, which are sixth-grade quality, too.) With Leslie Nielsen, Priscilla Presley, Ricardo Montalban, George Kennedy, O. J. Simpson, John Houseman, and Jeannette Charles as Queen Elizabeth. Written by David and Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, and Pat Proft, and directed by David Zucker.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

The Night of the Hunter (1955)—Despite its peculiar overtones of humor, this is one of the most frightening movies ever made (and truly frightening movies become classics of a kind). Robert Mitchum is the murderous, sex-obsessed, hymn-singing soul-saver with hypnotic powers, and his terrified new wife (Shelley Winters), who has a boy and a little girl from an earlier marriage, becomes his fervent disciple. He is something of a Pied Piper in reverse: adults trust him, children try to escape. The two kids' flight from the madman is a mysterious, dreamlike episode—a deliberately "artistic" suspense fantasy, broken by the appearance of a Christian variety of fairy godmother (Lillian Gish). The adaptation of Davis Grubb's novel was James Agee's last film work, and this shadowy horror fable was the first and only movie directed by Charles Laughton; it was a total financial disaster, and he never got a chance to direct again. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 19-21.)

The Paradine Case (1947)—There are few thrills in this big, misconceived courtroom thriller, directed by Hitchcock and ornately produced by David O. Selznick. Talky and stiff, the film never finds the passionate tone that it needs. The story (taken from a Robert Hichens novel) is about a barrister (Gregory Peck) who louses up a murder case because he falls in love with the defendant, his mysterious client Mrs. Paradine (Alida Valli). The judge is played by Charles Laughton, and Ethel Barrymore (looking very elegant) is his sensitive, mistreated wife. Also with Ann Todd, Louis Jourdan, Charles Coburn, Isabel Elsom, and Leo G. Carroll, who are mostly miserably miscast. The script was pinned on Alma Reville, but Hitchcock (her husband), James Bridie, and Selznick himself probably also struggled with it. Cinematography by Lee Garmes; music by Franz Waxman. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 22-23.)

Pelle the Conqueror—An aging, weak-willed Swedish widower (Max von Sydow) and his young son (Pelle Hvenegaard) emigrate to Denmark and find work on a large estate, where they're exploited and abused. The boy, more spirited than his father, ultimately escapes. The movie, written and directed by Bille August from a novel by Martin Andersen Nexo, isn't as dreary as it sounds. August directs with great skill and feeling, and the cinematography, by Jorgen Persson ("Elvira Madigan"), is sensational. The images are never simply beautiful—they always carry a strong emotional and dramatic charge. Yet there's a basic dullness in Nexo's material which August can't transcend. For most of the picture's two-and-a-half-hour running time, we're moved and bored simultaneously. In Danish and Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Pennies from Heaven (1936)—The cheerful tone of this Bing Crosby film grates on one like canned laughter. The story has something to do with an orphanage, and Madge Evans plays a welfare worker. There are some pleasant, mostly inconsequential songs, though, and Louis Armstrong turns up, with his orchestra, and Lionel Hampton is around. Directed by Norman Z. McLeod; with Edith Fellows. (Film Forum 2; Jan. 24.)

Running on Empty—Naomi Foner's screenplay is about the problems of a fugitive family: Mom and Dad (Christine Lahti and Judd Hirsch) have been on the run since 1971, when, as student activists, they helped blow up a campus building, not knowing that there was a man inside. They keep moving all over the country with their two sons (River Phoenix and Jonas Abry), changing their names and taking menial jobs so that they won't draw attention to themselves. The crisis comes when their older son (Phoenix), a musical prodigy, is noticed by a sympathetic teacher and encouraged to audition for Juilliard. The director, Sidney Lumet, buries everything that's original about the story, and leaves his hardworking performers bogged down in the mess, spinning their wheels. There's not a moment that feels authentic; instead of attending to detail, Lumet pumps the story full of gross, Oscar-worthy sentimentality. With Martha Plimpton, whose fresh, lively readings and expressions as the older son's girlfriend give some spark to most of her scenes.—T.R. (9/19/88) (Gotham Cinema.)

Talk Radio—Eric Bogosian's portrait of Barry Champlain, the abusive host of a late-night radio call-in show, was conceived for the stage, where it functioned as both a star vehicle and an all-purpose big metaphor for Life in These United States. The movie version, directed and co-written by Oliver Stone, magnifies the flaws in the original material. Bogosian's hyperthyroid performance isn't improved by the introduction of psychological explanations for the character's bad behavior: Champlain, it seems, acts like a jerk because he doesn't know how to give or receive love. Oh. Bogosian can't even begin to make this convincing, either because he doesn't quite believe it himself, or because his acting style is geared to punching home sharp isolated effects rather than developing a character. (Disturbingly, he's at his best when he's spitting out put-down lines and hanging up on callers.) And the dark-night-of-the-American-soul metaphor, more than a little dubious in the first place, has been jacked up to an insane, hysterical pitch. Stone and Bogosian have moved the setting from Cleveland to Dallas (presumably more sinister), and have pilfered bits of the true story of Alan Berg, the Southwestern radio personality who was murdered by white supremacists in 1984. They turn Champlain into a martyr. There's no sense trying to make anything coherent out of any of this. The filmmakers' paranoia is aggressively random—purely opportunistic. The movie keeps screaming at us inarticulately, as if it had a terribly important message to get across; after a while, all we want to do is say something rude and take another call. Also with Ellen Greene, Alec Baldwin, Leslie Hope, John C. McGinley, and Michael Wincott. Music by Stewart Copeland.—T.R. (Beekman, Waverly, and Ziegfeld.)

Tequila Sunrise—You have to be able to enjoy trashy shamelessness to enjoy old Hollywood and to enjoy this picture. Robert Towne, who wrote and directed, is soaked in the perfume of thirties and forties Hollywood romanticism. This is a lusciously silly movie; it has an amorous shine. The three talented stars are smashing: Mel Gibson is a former drug dealer who longs for a decent, respectable life; Kurt Russell is his friend who's the head of the narcotics squad in L.A. County; and Michelle Pfeiffer is the woman they both love. The crime plot often seems to be stalled, and by rational standards the stars' triangular shuffle is flimsy and stupid, but by romantic standards the whole thing is delectable. With Raul Julia, who has a big, likable, rumbling presence as a scoundrel, J. T. Walsh as a quintessential flatfoot, and Ann Magnuson. The golden cinematography is by Conrad Hall. (12/26/88) (Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 8th St. Playhouse, and Criterion Center.)

That Night in Rio (1941)—Alice Faye could dance and she had a lush contralto voice (no lover of movie musicals will forget her "This Year's Kisses" in "On the Avenue"), but this low-camp musical is one of her co-starring jobs with Don Ameche, the cipher that sings, in a double role. That's twice nothing. As the wife of a Brazilian baron (Ameche), she is weighed down by huge glassy necklaces and by the other characters' references to her great beauty. The mistaken-identity plot, with the neglected wife falling in love with the night-club entertainer (also Ameche) hired to impersonate her husband, is just a farce variation on "The Prisoner of Zenda." The film, directed by Irving Cummings, features the studio's Brazilian Bombshell, Carmen Miranda—it would be a euphemism to describe her as volatile. She plays the entertainer's girlfriend, wears fruit on her head, and sings "I Yi Yi Yi Yi (I Like You Very Much)." With Maria Montez, S. Z. Sakall, J. Carrol Naish, and Curt Bois. From a play by Rudolph Lothar and Hans Adler; at least five writers worked on the script. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 23.)

The Thin Blue Line—Errol Morris's trancelike, almost lyrical documentary tells the story of a 1976 cop-killing in Dallas and examines the process by which a man who is almost certainly innocent was convicted and sentenced to death for the crime. The movie's form is circular, spiralling, its obsessive, repetitive visual motifs echoed in Philip Glass's hauntingly monotonous score. In showing us the lies, the fears, the social pressures, the ulterior motives, the stubbornness, and the plain confusion that combined to produce the case against the unfortunate Randall Adams—whose fate is worthy of a Borges hero—Morris seems to be investigating not just this squalid murder but the very nature of untruth. His style is occasionally too fancy and elliptical for absolute clarity, but this is a powerful and thrillingly strange movie. Morris—who actually uncovered new evidence in the course of making the film—has turned Randall Adams' case into a kind of tabloid poetry, a meditation on uncertainty and the fascination of violence.—T.R. (9/5/88) (Quad Cinema.)

Torch Song Trilogy—Harvey Fierstein's adaptation of his much-honored play means to be funny and touching, but the mixture doesn't come out quite right. This chronicle of the life and loves of a New York drag queen named Arnold Beckoff (played by Fierstein) isn't a very rigorous dramatic construction: it alternates sitcom farce with tragedy, soap opera with cabaret, maudlin speechifying about self-respect with snappy one-liners. It has a sloppy, expansive spirit. Unfortunately, the lighter elements don't play very well in this film version, so the pathos dominates. Paul Bogart's direction relies heavily on closeups, and brings out the worst in Fierstein as a performer: watching this movie often feels like sitting in a room full of paintings of sad-eyed clowns. As Arnold's mother, Anne Bancroft does some of the grisliest overacting in memory. Also with Matthew Broderick, Brian Kerwin, Ken Page, and, in a small role, the famous female impersonator Charles Pierce. —T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Eastside Cinema, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

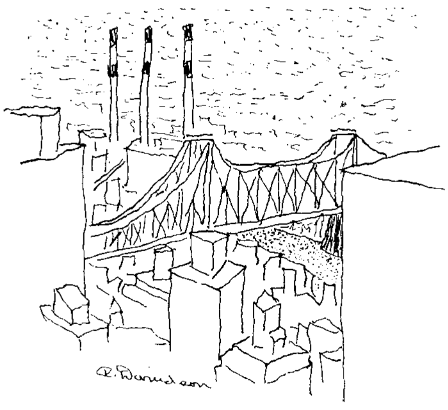
Twins—High Concept at its deadliest. A botched experiment in genetic engineering produces a wildly mismatched set of twins: Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito. They meet for the first time as adults in their thirties; high jinks ensue. It's actually worse than you'd expect. The screenplay is credited to four guys, and can't even claim one good joke per writer. The stars are charmless and predictable in their brain-dead-ringers roles. And the direction, by Ivan Reitman, is so inert that you'd swear the movie was a sequel to something. Also with Chloe Webb, Kelly Preston, and, too briefly, Trey Wilson. The muddy, dispiriting cinematography is by Andrzej Bartkowiak.—T.R. (Bay Cinema, Baronet, U. A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, Olympia, and National Twin.)

Two for the Road (1967)—The scriptwriter, Frederic Raphael, set his brittle stamp on this story of a husband and wife—Albert Finney and Audrey Hepburn—seen on European trips at different periods of their lives, not consecutively but shifting back and forth. Other films by the director, Stanley Donen, are not conspicuously edgy or self-conscious. (And when Donen fails it's usually in less complicated ways.) The intention is to show a modern marriage in which ideal people, in love, and successful, are still not happy. But the film's veneer is that of slick commercial comedy: there's always a swimming pool for the characters to take their pratfalls in. And at the same time Raphael is trying for a bitter comment on modern marital ennui, of the "La Notte" variety. So the facile, comic bits set off audience expectations that are then betrayed, and the clever, bitter stuff just seems sour. As the husband, Finney seems surly and beefy and rather infantile—which makes Hepburn look all the more gallant and poignant when the wife tries to make the best of things. Donen fumbled some sequences that *might* have worked: the comedy is often too broad, and the caricatures of Americans, played by William Daniels and Eleanor Bron, which would be embarrassingly overdone at fifty yards, are in closeup. With Jacqueline Bisset, Claude Dauphin, and Nadia Grey. Cinematography by Christopher Challis. (Cinema Village; Jan. 23-24.)

Weekend in Havana (1941)—Probably the cheerfullest weekend in Havana's history, what with Carmen Miranda, Alice Faye, John Payne, Cesar Romero, Leonid Kinskey, George Barbier, and everybody else on the Twentieth Century Fox lot beaming with fatuous good will. Carmen Miranda wears a headgear of grapefruit, grapes, apples, oranges, bananas, lemons, pineapples, and an occasional small plum. Walter Lang directed; Hermes Pan did the choreography. The songs (mostly by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon) are not top drawer. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 23.)

What Have I Done to Deserve This! (1984)—This film by Pedro Almodóvar has an Off Off Broadway informality. It's a generally likable dadaist farce about working-class family life in Madrid's housing projects—huge block buildings of dinky, cramped apartments. The heroine, Gloria (Carmen Maura), drags herself through eighteen-hour days with the help of No Doz and an occasional sniff of glue or detergent. She goes out to work as a cleaning woman and also cooks and scrubs for her taxi-driver husband (who's a gifted forger and is involved in a scheme to fake Hitler's memoirs) and her two sons—a fourteen-year-old drug dealer and a twelve-year-old hustler who seduces his schoolmates' fathers. You'll probably never see a woozier treatment of the breakdown of the family and the decay of society. In Spanish. (Quad Cinema.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child" stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

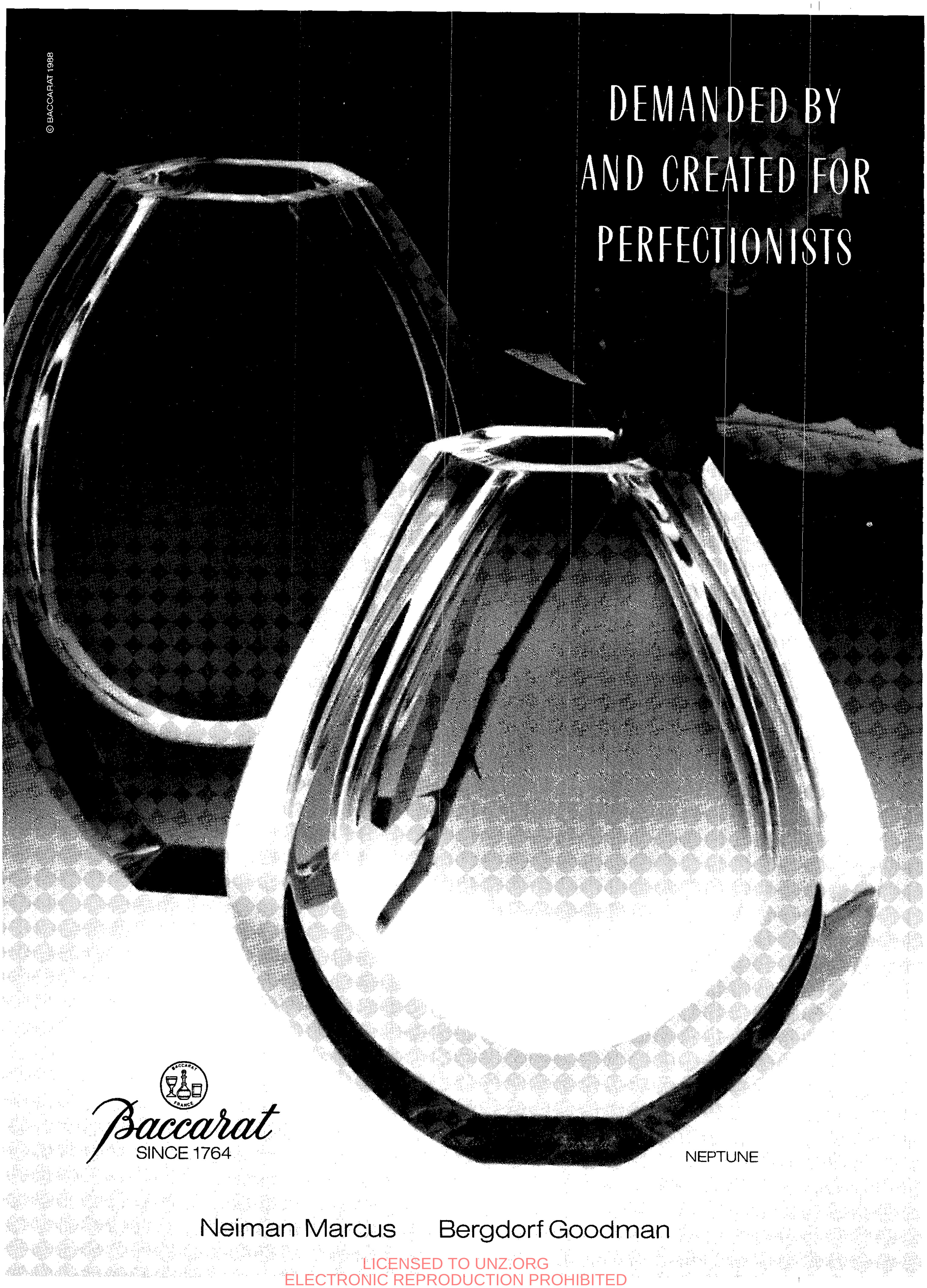


Witness for the Prosecution (1958)—Billy Wilder's inane yet moderately entertaining version of an Agatha Christie courtroom thriller, with Charles Laughton wiggling his wattles, and Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Power, and Elsa Lanchester. Script by Wilder and Harry Kurnitz. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 19-21.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

Working Girl—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment: she makes it into the world of mergers and acquisitions, and Carly Simon's choral music soars exultantly. Nichols may have been planning to let in a little bit of funk and tackiness, and then backed off; that might explain the double-entendre of the title and some of the plot details. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. The lines have a lot of surprise, but the situations (and digressions) are moldy. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, Kevin Spacey, Nora Dunn, Alec Baldwin, Philip Bosco, and Olympia Dukakis. The script is credited to Kevin Wade; the cinematography is by Michael Ballhaus. (1/9/89) (34th St. East, Coronet, 86th Street East Twin, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, Regency, and Criterion Center.)

Young and Innocent ("The Girl Was Young"; 1937)—Hitchcock reworks "The 39 Steps," this time using a very young hero and heroine. Once again, the hero (now Derrick de Marney) is accused of a murder he didn't commit; he tries to track down the real killer while the police track him. The bewildered teen-age girl (Nova Pilbeam) who tries to help him is too earnest a conception to be very amusing; the film is pretty fair Hitchcock, though not as sexy or as witty as "The 39 Steps." With Basil Radford, Percy Marmont, and Mary Clare. Hitchcock turns up, looking very young, as a press photographer, holding a tiny camera in front of him, like a talisman. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 24.)



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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

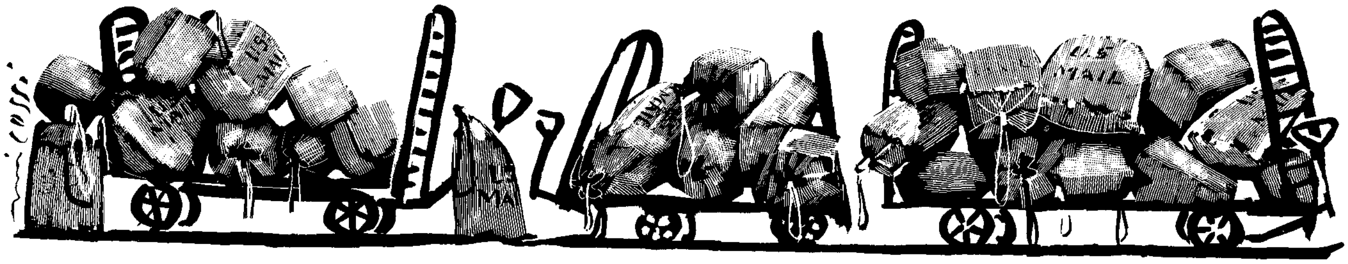
FROM a friend of ours who hangs around museums a lot:

One of the best things about snow in New York is the way that, for as long as it falls, it provides a constant natural clock—it gives hourglass time in a digital-readout city. At about three-thirty on the Friday that this winter's first snow fell, I was on the second-floor landing of the Museum of Modern Art, just where you get off the escalator and turn left toward the big Cézanne "Bather" and the picture galleries beyond, and I found myself standing by the window just watching the snow accumulate. Somewhere in a story I read once—I think it was by Isaac Bashevis Singer—a snowfall occurs, and a traveller, a yeshiva student on his way from one rabbinical wrangle to another, says to himself, "Snow comes from Heaven, and brings us the peace of a better world." I thought about those words as I watched it snow in the sculpture garden. The snow seemed at first like a benediction, reconciling all the battles over styles and origins and first causes which preoccupy the art critics and historians: Rodin and Henry Moore and Tony Smith and Matisse and Oldenburg were all going white together, like schismatic old radicals in the same nursing home.

Then I noticed that the snow wasn't falling evenly on the objects—at least, not on the Rodin "Balzac." It fell on the enormous hood and on the broad, thrusting chest, and glanced off all the rest. What emerged was a white diagrammatic reduction of the statue's essence, like one of those horrible defaced books one finds in college libraries, with the "key" passages highlighted in yellow: "In the 'Balzac,' Rodin *distorts the head and heart* of the statue for *expressive emphasis*, suggesting, moreover, that the monumentality of the statue is a consequence of its *colossal marriage of sensibility and intellect*." Then I looked at the Henry Moores and saw that they, too, were being snowed on pedantically. Each of the figures in the famous seated family, near the northwest corner of the garden, received an even crescent of snow across the shoulders, so that the snow made a repeated pattern, joining the figures together in a series of white arches. Linearism as Symbol of Unity! On the big, bonelike Moore that sits on the east side of the garden, however, the snow was just drifting around, marrying itself to the sculpture. The Neo-Romantic Dream of Culture as Nature!

My favorite works in the garden are Matisse's four low-relief women's backs against the north wall, each of which is less roundly modelled than the one to its left. The snow revealed something about them, too. The first back took the snow gracefully, like light; it fell unevenly across her shoulders, and into the little crevice of her spine. This fork of snow became more regular on the next two sisters. And the last one, the most abstract and archaic, directed the snow to fall across her in a straight and severe cross. I had never before seen the logic behind Matisse's sensuality made so overt—almost embarrassingly evident, like an X-ray.

In the snow, the objects in the garden seemed to have seized the initiative from nature; it was as if each of the artists, far from being blanketed by a common peace, were using the occasion to hold an introductory seminar on the essential quality of his own work. The Tony Smith was collecting snow in perfectly bevelled edges and rows; the Oldenburg "Geometric Mouse," which has nothing to do with nature anyway, was shaking off the snow like a retriever; the chunky Maillol nude was brazenly defying the snow to snow on her; and the jaunty Nadelman soldier was just looking on, a thin and elegant rim of snow running around his helmet. At first, I thought, Well, so much for the peace of a better world! But then I decided that perhaps the rabbinical student was right about the snow, and that this is what Heaven looks like: not a place where everything is blanketed by a common



emotion but a place where everything is exactly and inarguably what it wants to be. If we do glimpse the Celestial City in the snow, then perhaps it is a place where every drawing has a caption and every statue an explanatory label—a place where every line has to be explained, to angels as anxious and uncertain as we are.

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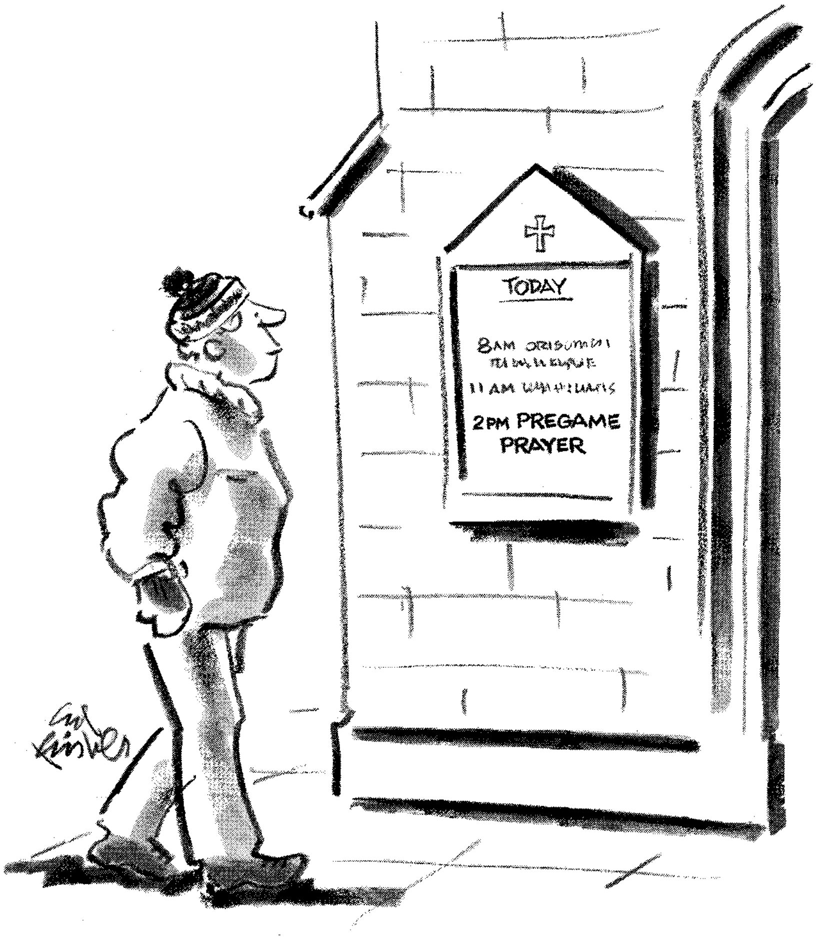
Slave

WHEN Albert Yeganeh says "Soup is my lifeblood," he means it. And when he says "I am extremely hard to please," he means that, too. Working like a demon alchemist in a tiny storefront kitchen at 259-A West Fifty-fifth Street, Mr. Yeganeh creates anywhere from eight to seventeen soups every weekday. His concoctions are so popular that a wait of half an hour at the lunchtime peak is not uncommon, although there are strict rules for conduct in line. But more on that later.

"I am psychologically kind of a health freak," Mr. Yeganeh said the other day, in a lisping staccato of Armenian origin. "And I know that soup is the greatest meal in the world. It's very good for your digestive system. And I use only the best, the freshest ingredients. I am a perfectionist. When I make a clam soup, I use three different kinds of clams. Every other place uses canned clams. I'm called crazy. I am not crazy. People don't realize why I get so upset. It's because if the soup is not perfect and I'm still selling it, it's a torture. It's *my* soup, and that's why I'm so upset. First you clean and then you cook. I don't believe that ninety-nine per cent of the restaurants in New York know how to clean a tomato. I tell my crew to wash the parsley *eight* times. If they wash it five or six times, I scare them. I tell them they'll go to jail if there is sand in the parsley. One time, I found a mushroom on the floor, and I fired the guy who left it there." He spread his arms, and added, "This place is the only one like it in . . . in . . . the whole earth! One day, I hope to learn something from the other places, but so far I haven't. For example, the other day I went to a very fancy restaurant and had borscht. I had to send it back. It was *junk*. I could see all the chemicals in it. I never use chemicals. Last weekend, I had lobster bisque in Brooklyn, a very well-known place. It was *junk*. When I make a lobster bisque, I use a whole lobster. You know, I never advertise. I don't have to. All the big-shot chefs and the kings of the hotels come here to see what *I'm* doing."



As you approach Mr. Yeganeh's Soup Kitchen International from a distance, the first thing you notice about it is the awning, which proclaims "HOMEMADE HOT, COLD, DIET SOUPS." The second thing you notice is an aroma so delicious that it makes you want to take a bite out of the air. The third thing you notice, in front of the kitchen, is an electric signboard that flashes, say, "Today's Soups . . . Chicken Vegetable . . . Mexican Beef Chili . . . Cream of Watercress . . . Italian Sausage . . . Clam Bisque . . . Beef Barley . . . Due to Cold Weather . . . For Most Efficient and Fastest Service the Line Must . . . Be Kept Moving . . . Please . . . Have Your Money . . . Ready . . . Pick the Soup of Your Choice . . . Move to Your Extreme . . . Left After Ordering."

"I am not prejudiced against color or religion," Mr. Yeganeh told us, and he jabbed an index finger at the flashing sign. "Whoever follows that I treat very well. My regular customers don't say anything. They are very intelligent and well educated. They know I'm just trying to move the line. The New York cop is very smart—he sees everything but says nothing. But the young girl who wants to stop and tell you how nice you look and hold everyone up—*yah!*" He made a guillotining motion with his hand. "I tell you, I hate to work with the public. They treat me like a slave. My philosophy is: The customer is always wrong and I'm always right. I raised my prices to try to get rid of some of these people, but it didn't work."

The other day, Mr. Yeganeh was dressed in chefs' whites with orange smears across his chest, which may have been some of the carrot soup cooking in a huge pot on a little stove in one corner. A three-foot-long hand-held mixer from France sat on the sink, looking like an overgrown gardening tool. Mr. Yeganeh spoke to two young helpers in a twisted Armenian-Spanish barrage, then said to us, "I have no overhead, no trained waitresses, and I have the cashier here." He pointed to himself theatrically. Beside the doorway, a glass case with fresh green celery, red and yellow peppers, and purple eggplant was topped by five big gray soup urns. According to a piece of cardboard taped to the door, you can buy Mr. Yeganeh's soups in three sizes, costing from four to fifteen dollars. The order of any well-behaved customer is accompanied by little wax-paper packets of bread, fresh vegetables (such as scallions and radishes), fresh fruit (such as cherries or an orange), a chocolate mint, and a plastic spoon. No coffee, tea, or other drinks are served.

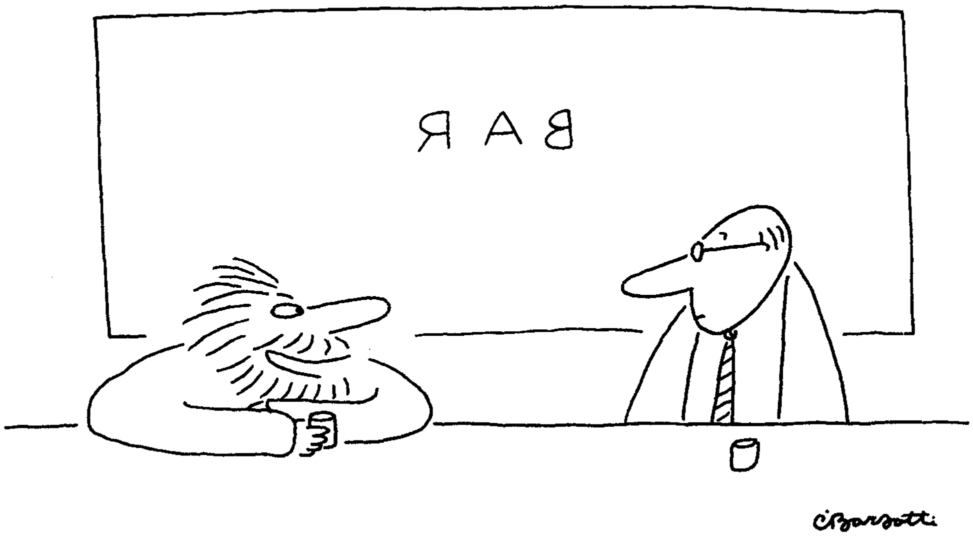
"I get my recipes from books and theories and my own taste," Mr. Yeganeh said. "At home, I have several hundreds of books. When I do research, I find that I don't know anything. Like cabbage is a cancer fighter, and some fish is good for your heart but some is bad. Every day, I should have one sweet, one spicy, one cream, one vegetable soup—and they *must* change, they should always taste a little different." He added that he wasn't sure how extensive his repertoire was, but that it probably includes at least eighty soups, among them African peanut butter, Greek moussaka, hamburger, Reuben, B.L.T., asparagus and caviar, Japanese shrimp miso, chicken chili, Irish corned beef and cabbage, Swiss chocolate, French calf's brain, Korean beef ball, Italian shrimp and eggplant Parmesan, buffalo, ham and egg, short rib, Russian beef Stroganoff, turkey cacciatore, and Indian mulligatawny. "The chicken and the seafood are an addiction, and when I have French garlic soup I let people have only one small container each," he said. "The doctors and nurses love that one."

A lunch line of thirty people stretched down the block from Mr. Yeganeh's doorway. Behind a construction worker was a man in expensive leather, who was in front of a woman in a fur hat. Few people spoke. Most had their money out and their orders ready.

At the front of the line, a woman in a brown coat couldn't decide which soup to get and started to complain about the prices.

"You talk too much, dear," Mr. Yeganeh said, and motioned to her to move to the left. "Next!"

"Just don't talk. Do what he says," a man huddled in a blue parka warned.



"I hear the middle class is really getting it in the neck."

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"He's downright rude," said a blond woman in a blue coat. "Even abusive. But you can't deny it, his soup is the best."

Kegling

A WOMAN we know writes:

A friend of mine found these terrific shoes in a secondhand store, bowling shoes divided longitudinally by color: the outer half is red, the inner half is blue, and a stripe of white runs up from toe to tongue. They have a pair of crossed bowling pins on each heel and a pair of jingle bells wired onto the laces. The shoes weren't her size, but she bought them anyway, and then gave them to me, with a smile, when she found out they would fit me. I wear them a lot. I like to look down at them twinkling there on my feet; they make me feel like doing soft-shoe routines. I went out to dinner with friends the other evening, and we discovered that the shoes knew how to gallop, a skill we had learned in second-grade P.E. but had forgotten.

I was in St. Louis not long ago, and the shoes walked me right into the National Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum. It's across the street from Busch Stadium—a pudgy building of gray and pink pebbles firmly anchored on a triangular lot by a squat tower at each apex. Inside are three floors of bowling displays and trinkets, and eight functioning bowling lanes. St. Louisans rent the place after hours for parties. They hire a disk jockey and a caterer and spend the evening eating, dancing, looking at the exhibits, and riding the elevators, and when all else palls they bowl a few frames. Last year, more than two hundred events were held in the museum, including a fortieth-birthday party, a wedding reception, and a Bar Mitzvah.

The display area is along an easy ramp that spirals through the building, and on it I learned, from a diorama showing a slouch-faced humanoid dressed in hides and animal teeth, that the first bowler may have been a caveman tossing rocks. A glass case held reproductions of bowling pins from 5200 B.C., unearthed in Egypt by Sir Flinders Petrie. They looked like pointed darning eggs with flat bottoms. A panel showed two muscly Anglo-Saxons escaped from an opera stage and dressed in skins and horned caps; one was holding a thick cup of something refreshing, and the other, war axe strapped to his waist, was holding an immense skin ball over his head. According to the panel, the Brothers Grimm and the historian Wilhelm Pehle traced bowling back to a pre-Christian game in northern Europe called Steinstossen, which consisted of knocking down upright stones by throwing weapons at them. Pehle went on to link bowling to a church ritual among the northern tribes in which parishioners rolled a stone at a *Kegel*, or club used for self-defense, which they renamed *Heide*—the heathen, that which is pagan, the Devil. Toppling the *Heide* symbolized the slaying of Satan, according to St. Boniface, an eighth-century English missionary, who adapted the game for his flock.

Strong stuff! But my shoes jingled me on up the ramp and planted themselves in front of a diorama of Martin Luther bowling. There he is, life-size, in flowing black robes, a soft hat on his head, and with a sprightly touch of red at his throat. His feet are in the correct bowling stance, and his hand is back and curved over a ball, which he is about to throw at wooden pins. Two children crouch watching. Behind him are bowling banners. Martin Luther built a bowling alley for his family and household, and he wrote that he himself enjoyed rolling out a ball now and again.

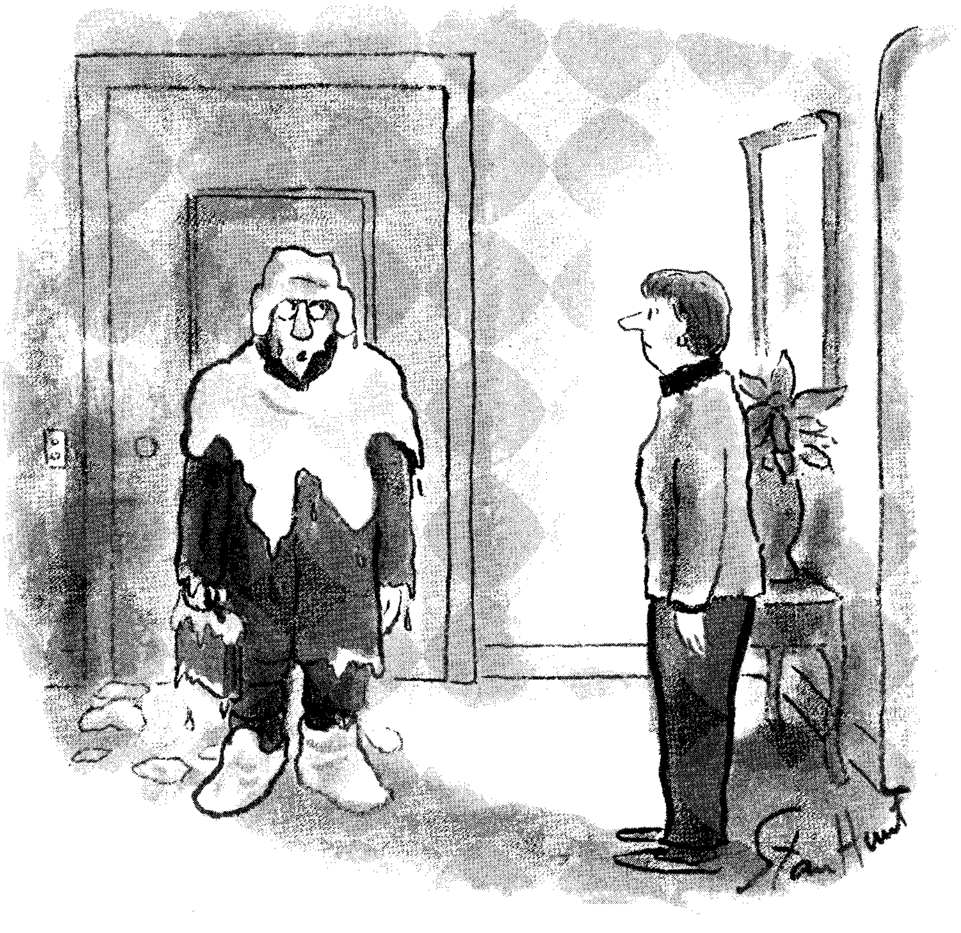
Apparently, all over Europe there were people having too much fun bowling, for eventually the Germans, the French, and the English all banned the game, ostensibly because it encouraged gambling and rowdyism, separated families, and lured men from the armies. But the laws made exceptions for the wealthy and the titled, and members of the lower orders found loopholes. Sly bowlers in England invented a game, not specifically banned by law, called Bubble the Justice, in which balls were rolled into shallow holes. The museum's message is that the urge to bowl is irrepressible and that all over Europe people went on bowling and called what they were doing by other names: skales, loggats, kayles, closh, cloish, Platzbahnkegeln, quilles de neuf, skittles.

In America, the English brought lawn bowling to Virginia. The Dutch brought ninepins to New York. At the end of the spiral ramp, I stopped to peer into a mutoscope, an elegant gilt-spangled, light-filled stand the size and roughly the shape of a large gumball machine—a turn-of-the-century penny-arcade version of the movies. It told the story of Rip Van Winkle on a roll of cards. When I turned the mutoscope's crank fast enough, Rip's diminutive friends spiritedly knocked down their ninepins. At an IBM terminal at the top of the museum, even I, a computer illiterate, could press enough keys to discover that no one in the town where I live has ever bowled a three-hundred, or perfect, game, but that in the town in which I was born five screenfuls of folks have. I knew none of them. I felt like Rip Van Winkle.

My shoes danced on through the Bowling Hall of Fame (dark, respectful, male) and the Women's Bowling Hall of Fame (light, cheerful, suggestive of cookies). The museum was funded by major donations from equipment manufacturers and the producers of those beverages usually associated with the sport, and also by donations from bowling associations, many of which raised their contributions through bake sales. I examined a bowling-shirt display, antique bowling pins, bowling in art and quilt and stein. I circled the bowling lanes (four modern and four nostalgic); I would have liked to use one of them, but my shoes reminded me I didn't know how. I admired the historic-beer-tray display and ended up at the world's only mobile bowling pin, built by Mike Skrovan, of Cleveland, Ohio, around the chassis of a 1936 Studebaker coupé.

On my way back out to the street, I waved to the young man at the visitors' desk.

"*Nice* shoes," he said, with a smile.



"Alternate-side-of-the-street parking has been suspended."

No Dancing

A FEW weeks ago, we asked Janet how she was.

"I'm distraught," she said. "But I've been distraught before. Have you met Giles? Would you like to spend an evening with Giles? He's very different."

We said no.

"He's a very different person," said Janet. "Have I mentioned that I might be evicted? My neighbor recommended a lawyer, but the lawyer expected seven hundred and fifty dollars in advance, so I said could I get back to her. If you're over a certain age, you can go to this old-age place where you can get legal advice for free, but the Jewish holidays were coming up. They gave me the name of another place, that takes people of any age. I was too upset about being thrown out of this apartment and about my friend Karl calling me a moron. I couldn't function in my normal way. He said other people read books all the time. I don't think I'm actually a moron—I'm too bright to know nothing. Therefore, it's my fault. Actually, it's my mother's fault."

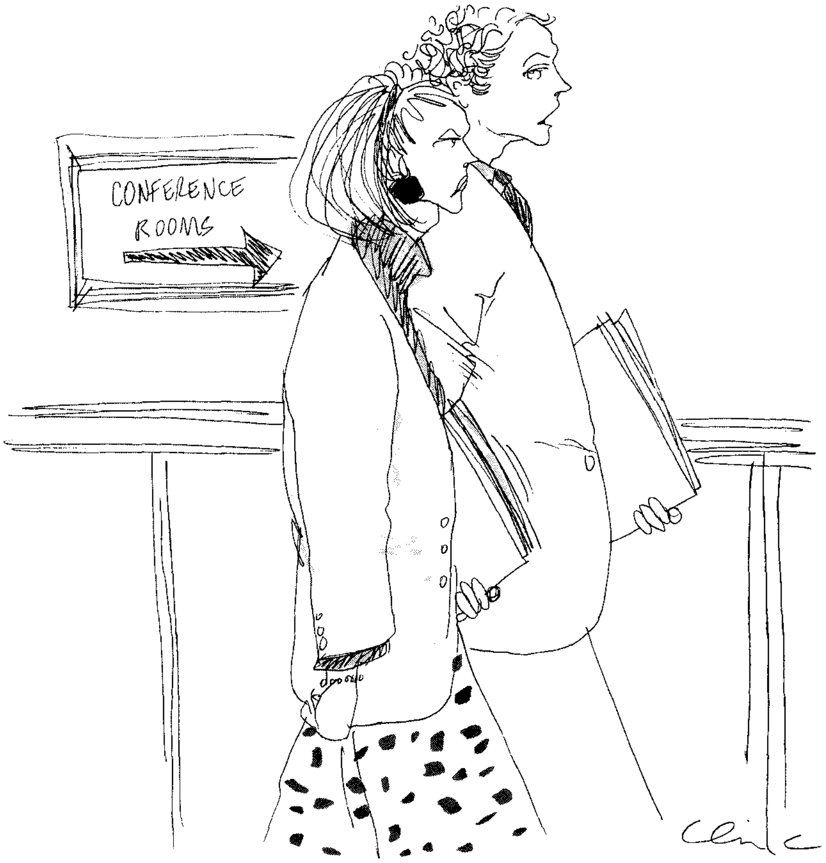
We had heard about Janet's mother.

"In my day," Janet went on, "if you said someone was politically aware, that meant you were talking about a Communist. I was politically aware of *not* being a Communist. That's only because they wouldn't let me in. They said I was emotionally— I can't remember what they said. Wasn't emotionally mature enough to be allowed in. I consider it very lucky, because if they had let me join the Party I would have had to resign."

We asked why.

"Why? Because I don't like being told what to do. They're very bossy. I was never good at group stuff. Did I tell you how I got kicked out of every feminist march I was ever on? One of those marches where you march up Fifth Avenue for something? I was yelling, 'We want the vote!' Nobody thought that was funny. Causes don't have senses of humor. My other ideas about life are the Golden Rule and Thou shalt not kill."

We nodded.



"You look fabulous after you've just sent an angry telex."

"A friend of mine, Sue, recently admitted to me that she has faults, too, but she doesn't bring up her faults constantly to annoy me. When you have two-thirds of your life behind you and one-fourth ahead of you, you want to do something that's useful or something that's fun. Which means I want either to work for the homeless or to travel. I haven't heard from Cuomo about a job with him. I once had the following conversation with him. Me: I want to work for you. Cuomo: Good. Me: I mean and get paid. Cuomo: Fine. I'm trying to arrange a dinner at Cyrus Vance's with Cuomo and Pavarotti. So far, I've been told that a Tuesday or Wednesday would be O.K. Here's something I found in the paper: 'Healthy Old Age Begins in Teens.' "

Janet handed us the clipping.

"I was supposed to go to court and ask them to adjourn kicking me out of my apartment for two weeks. I had to go to a funeral instead of being evicted. A lawyer told me he would change the eviction date to a week from the funeral. I said, 'Make it two weeks.' Come to think of it, that was two weeks ago. I may have been evicted and not know it. I have to look out the window and see if my possessions are on the street. That's how you tell. I thought I should take pieces of pipes and rugs with me to court, evidence of leaks. I have a lot of ruined things in separate closets. Some I discarded. You can't keep wet and moldy things for years. I should have sued the landlord years ago instead of just thinking about it."

Janet opened a letter.

"Winnie Mandela wants me to free South Africa. I used to call my landlord up and say, 'I think I'll sue you.' He pretended he didn't hear me. He wouldn't say anything. I wonder what would happen if I wore the same clothes I wore yesterday. They took away my office and gave me a raise on the same day. They moved me to a floor where everybody else is in Community Services. Did I tell you about my three letters from the I.R.S.? I opened one of them. It said, 'You have ignored our first two notices.' Call me next week."

We did.

"I walked into the courtroom and saw this kid," Janet reported. "I said, 'You're the judge? I could be your mother.' We had to wait for the landlord to show up. At one point, I asked if I could get a cup of coffee. 'Go ahead, Mom,' he said. I showed him all my pictures of me with celebrities. By this time, he was calling me Janet. After a couple of hours, the judge said, 'I'm not holding up this case for more than another fifteen minutes,' and the landlord's lawyer said, 'In the name of justice . . .' The judge said, 'Will you cut that out? Produce your client.' To kill some time, I said 'Guess how old I am,' and I went into my tap-dance routine. The court officer said in a very stern voice, 'There is no dancing allowed in the court.' Finally, the judge got fed up with the landlord's lawyer talking about justice and said, 'You can forget this name-of-justice stuff. Case dismissed.' Hold on a minute while I open a fortune cookie."

We held on.

"It says, 'You will inherit some money or a small piece of land.' I wonder which one I would rather inherit."

THE WIDOW

Bridget was her name. She played cards like a trooper, and her tipple was gin-and-lime. She kept lodgers, but only select lodgers: people who came for the dapping, or maybe a barrister who would come overnight to discuss a case with a client or with a solicitor.

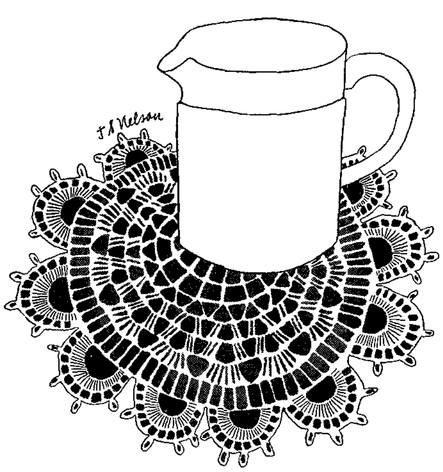
The creamery manager was the first guest to be more or less permanent. After a few months it was clear he wasn't going to build the bungalow that he had said he would, and after a few more months he was inviting girls to the house as if it were his own. Oh the stories, the stories! Card parties, drink, and God knows what else. No one dared ask expressly. Brazen women in finery, with nail varnish and lizard handbags and so forth, often came, sometimes staying for the weekend. Bridget had devoted the sitting room to him and his guests, choosing to say that whatever they wanted to do was their business.

She worked in the daytime, in a local shop, where she was a bookkeeper. She kept herself very much to herself—sat in her little office with its opaque beaded-glass panelling, and wrote out the bills and paid for commodities, and rarely, if ever, came out to the shop to serve customers. The owner and she got on well. He called her Biddy, short for Bridget, which meant, of course, that they were good friends. Occasionally she would emerge from her glass booth to congratulate a young mother on having a baby or to sympathize with someone over a death, but this, as people said, was a formality, a mere gesture. No one had been invited to her new pebble-dash house, and the two sisters who called unannounced were left standing on the doorstep, with some flimsy excuse about her distempering the kitchen ceiling. She was determined to remain aloof, and as if to emphasize the point she had venetian blinds fitted.

You may ask, as the postmistress had asked—the postmistress her sworn enemy—"Why have venetian blinds drawn at all times, winter and summer, daylight and dark? What is Bridget trying to hide?" What went on there at night, after she strolled home, carrying a few tasties that the owner of the shop had given her, such as slices of bacon or tins of salmon? It was rumored that she changed from her dark shop overall into brighter clothes. A child had seen her carrying in a scuttle of coal. So there was a fire in the parlor, people were heard to say.

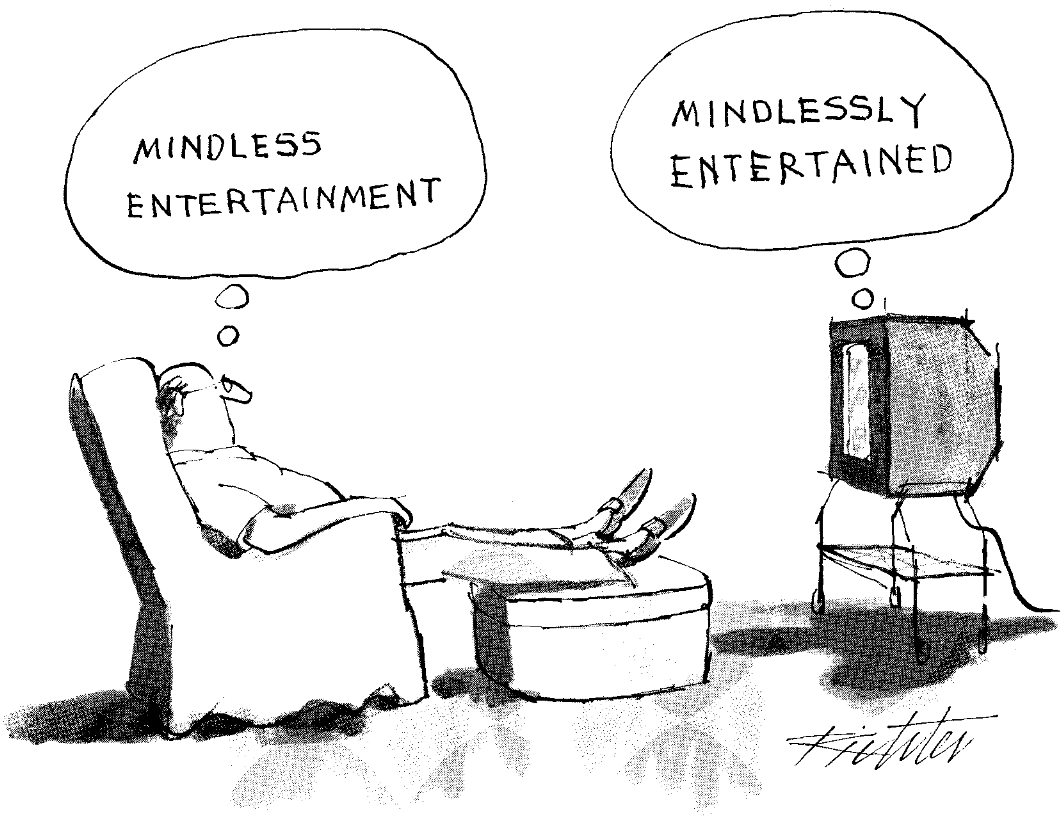
PARTIES began to take place, and many a night a strange car or two, or even three, would park outside her driveway and remain there till well near dawn. Often people were heard emerging, singing "She'll be comin' 'round the mountain when she comes, when she comes." Such frivolities inevitably lead to scandals, and there came one that stunned the parish. A priest died in the house. He was not a local priest but had arrived in one of those strange cars with strange registration numbers. The story was that he went up to the bathroom, missed a step as he came out, and then, of course—it could happen to anyone—tripped and fell. He fell all the way down the fifteen steps of stairs, smashed his head on the grandfather clock that was at the bottom, and lay unconscious on the floor. The commotion was something terrible, as Rita, a neighbor, reported. There were screams from inside the house. The creamery manager, it seems, staggered to his car, but was too inebriated to even start the engine; then a young lady followed, drove off, and shortly after the local curate arrived at the house with the viaticum. An hour later, the ambulance took the priest to the hospital, but he was already dead.

Bridget put a brave face on it. Instead of hiding her understandable guilt, she acknowledged it. She spoke over and over again of the fatal night, the fun that had preceded the tragedy, the priest, not touching a drop, regaling them with the most wonderful account of being admitted to the Vatican—not for an audience, as he had thought, but to see the treasures. "Thousands of pounds' worth of treasures . . . thousands of pounds' worth of treasures!" he had apparently said as he described a picture or a sculpture or a chalice or vestments. Then Bridget would go on to describe how they had all played a game of forty-five and before they knew where they were it was three in the morning and Father So-and-So rose to return home, going upstairs first. He had had, as she said, glass after glass of lemonade. Then the terrible thud, and their not believing what it was, and the creamery manager getting up from the table and going out to the hall, and then a girl going out, and then the screams. Bridget made it known that she would never forgive herself for not having had a stronger bulb on the landing. At the High Mass for the priest's remains, she wore a long black lace thing, which she had not taken out since her beloved husband had died.



Her husband had been drowned years before, which is why she was generally known as the Widow. They had been married only a few months and were lovebirds. They had lived in another house then—a little house with a porch that caught the sun, where they grew geraniums and begonias and even a few tomatoes. Her despair at his death was so terrible it was legendary. Her roar, when the news was broken to her, rent the parish, and was said to have been heard in distant parishes. Babies in their cots heard it, as did old people who were deaf and sitting beside the fire, as did the men working out in the fields. When she was told that her husband had drowned, she would not believe it: her husband was not dead; he was a strong swimmer; he swam down at the docks every evening of his life before his tea. She rebelled by roaring. She roared all that evening and all that night. Nobody in the village could sleep. When they found his body in the morning with reeds matted around it, her cries reached a gargantuan pitch. She could not be let to go to the chapel. Women held her down to keep her from going berserk.

Then, two days after he was buried, when the cattle began to trample over



the grave and treat it as any old grave, she stopped her keening. Soon after, she put on a perfectly calm, cheerful, resigned countenance. She told everyone that she was a busy woman now and had much to do. She had to write to thank all the mourners, and thank the priests who officiated at the High Mass, and then decide what to do about her husband's clothes. Above all, she was determined to sell her house. She was advised against it, but nothing would deter her. That house was for Bill and herself—"Darling Bill," as she called him—and only by leaving it would the memory, the inviolate memory, of their mornings and their evenings and their nights and their tête-à-têtes remain intact.

She sold the house easily, though far too cheaply, and went back up the country to live with her own folks—a brother and a deaf-mute sister. No one in the village heard of her until a few years later, when her brother died and her sister went to an institution. Unable to manage the tillage and foddering, Bridget sold the farm and moved back to the town. She was a changed woman when she came back—very much more in charge of herself. Very much more the toff, as people said. She got her job as a bookkeeper in the shop and started to build a house, and while it was being built many conjectured that she had a second husband in mind. There were rumors about bachelors seen talking to her, and especially one who came from America and took her to the dog track in Limerick a few Saturday nights in a row and bought her gins. The news of her drinking soon spread, and the verdict was that she could bend the elbow with any man. Hence, being installed in her new house was not the neighborly affair it might have been. There was no housewarming, for instance; no little gifts of cream or homemade black puddings or porter cake; no good-luck horseshoe on her door. In short, the people ostracized her. She seemed not to mind, having always kept to herself anyway. She had a good wardrobe, she had a good job, and as soon as she started to keep select boarders—only two, or at the most three—everybody remarked that she was getting above herself. Her house was sarcastically called the Pleasure Dome, and sometimes, more maliciously, she was coupled with the song "Biddy the Whore, who lived in a hotel without any door."

Her first two guests were strangers—men who were doing some survey for the land commission, and whom all the farmers suspected of being meddlesome. They and Bridget became the best of friends—sat outside on deck chairs and were heard laughing; went to Mass together, the last Mass on Sundays; and in the evening imbibed, either at home or in the hotel. When they left, the creamery manager arrived—a big man with wide shoulders and a large, reddish face. He was voluble, affectionate. He touched people's lapels, particularly women's, and he was not shy about asking for a kiss. A few of the girls professed to have spurned him. The old maids, who mistrusted him, watched him when he left the creamery at half past five in the evening to see if he would go straight to his lodgings or across to the town to have a pint or two. They would lie in wait behind walls, or behind the windows of their sitting rooms. He rarely mentioned Bridget by name but referred to her as the Landlady, often adding how saucy she was, and what a terrific cook. He was especially fond of her lamb stew, which, as people said, was really mutton stew.

SOON the creamery manager, whose name was Michael, acquired a steady girlfriend called Mea. Mea was a bank clerk from the city, and she came in her car at weekends and stayed two nights. He would splash himself with eau de cologne on the evenings she was expected, and was to be seen traipsing in front of the house, so eager was he to see her. They never kissed on the steps but always went inside and left some of the local snoopers, especially the women, demented with curiosity as to what happened next. She could, as Bridget told the shopkeeper, who then told it to everyone else, twist Michael around her little finger. She was subject, it seemed, to the most fitful moods—sometimes bright as a hummingbird, other times professing to have a headache or a sinus or a stomach ache, and refusing even to speak to him. Once, she locked herself in her

COMING INTO LAGUARDIA LATE AT NIGHT

The glide almost outside of time, the plane
at landing speed. It's January, dead
clear as starlight, the city in the air,
the Manichaean pitch black of the buildings
six thousand feet up the window mountain.
Adrift and north: Capella, Canis Minor.
In another year, leaving the city
in a car, I could see in the mirror
from the backbone of the bridge the wet sun
sliding into just one building, gold on
gold, and into the shadow wells. Like those
blossoms that fall to earth from light-years off,
some of the fire stays, some floats like torches
passed ahead of us along the pathways.

—Stanley Plumly

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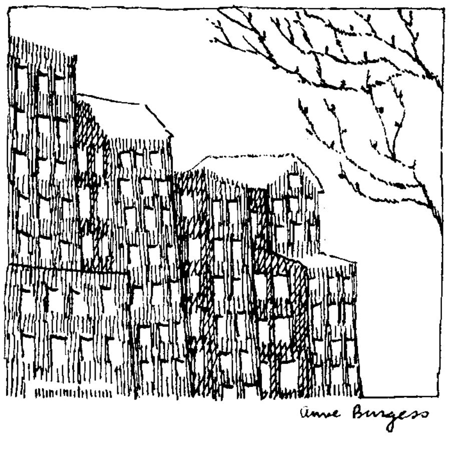
bedroom and did not come out for the whole evening. She ate like a bird, bleached her hair with egg yolk and lemon, and cut a great dash at Mass or devotions, always managing to have a different hat or a different head scarf each Sunday. It was noticed that she hardly prayed at all—that she looked around, summing up the people, sneering at them—and that she was not certain when were the times to stand and when were the times to kneel, but would look around to gauge what others were doing.

"Ah, it's her sweet mystery . . . her sweet mystery," Michael had told Bridget, who had told the shopkeeper, who had, of course, told others. Before long, Mea and Michael were engaged, and Mea was coming not only two nights a week but three nights a week, and driving all around with him to see if there were any uninhabited houses or bungalows, because of course they would want their own place. Each week, as well, she brought some item of furniture, usually something bulky—a mirror or a wardrobe or a whatnot or a bureau—and he was heard to say that she was furniture mad. In jest he would ask the men why he was putting a rope around his neck.

They were to be married in June, but one evening early in May there was a rift. Michael broke it off. It happened at the hotel, just as the crowd was wishing them well and making innuendos about the patter of little feet. Michael was very drunk—his drinking had got heavy over the past few weeks—and suddenly he turned to Mea and said, very candidly and almost tearfully, that he could not go through with it. She was to keep the ring; he wanted everything to end in good faith. She slapped him, there and then, three times on the cheek in front of everyone. "How dare you," she said with the acerbity of a governess, and then she ran out and he followed, and soon they drove off down the Shannon Road—no doubt to patch things up, as people said. But Michael was adamant. The engagement was broken off.

She left that night, and Michael hid for three days. He went back to the creamery, drawn and unshaven, and on that Friday he learned of her suit for breach of promise by reading of it in the weekly newspaper. There were photos of him and Mea, mention of some little lovey-dovey exchanges, and even a photo of Bridget, who Mea said had had too much influence over him and was probably responsible for the rift. Mea also talked about her broken heart, the several plans she had made, the house that she envisaged, the little rose garden, then discussed her bottom drawer, which was full of linen and lavender sachets and so on. Above all, she bemoaned the fact that her romantic future with any other man was out of the question; in short, that her life was destroyed. Michael received a solicitor's letter, consulted his local solicitor, and was said to have paid her a hefty compensation. Then he went on the batter for a few weeks and was carted to the Cistercian monastery, and finally came home looking thinner and much more subdued. "A gold-digger, a gold-digger, that's what she was," Bridget would say whenever Mea's name was mentioned, and in time the matter was forgotten.

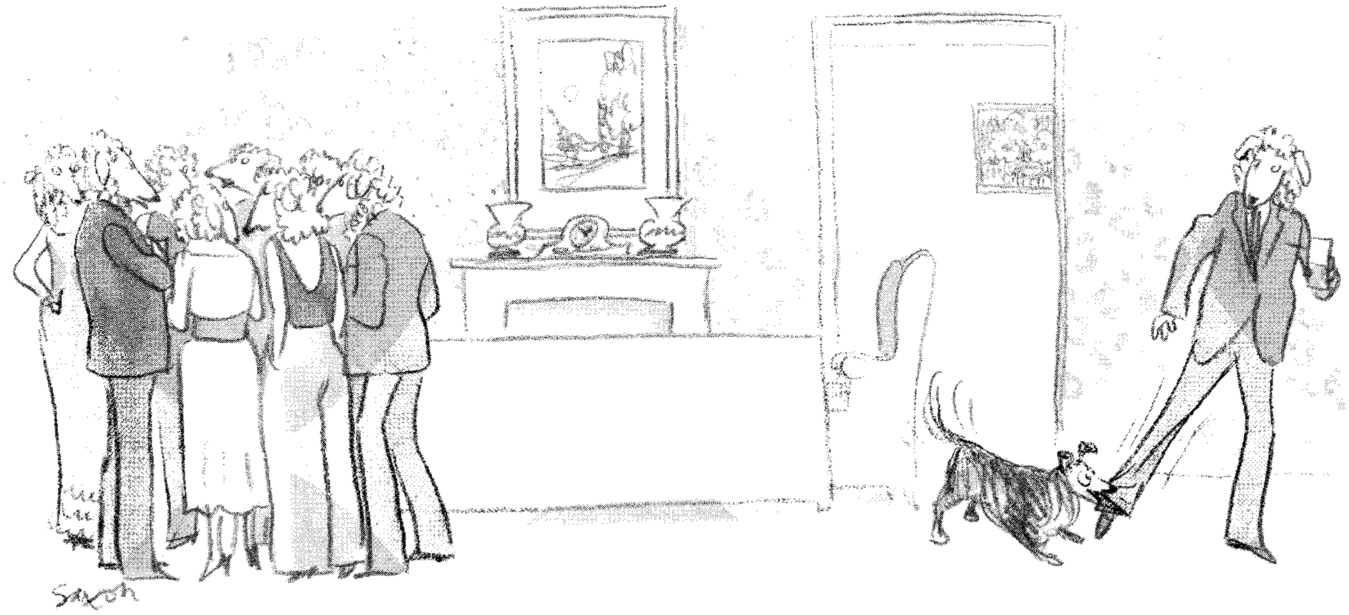
IT was perceived—first by the postmistress, then by another woman, who spoke about it to several others—that Bridget and the creamery manager were flirting openly. Soon after, they were seen holding hands as they took a walk down the Chapel Road after Benediction. They had lingered in the chapel, allowing the others to leave. It was the sacristan who saw them, and ran and told it in the town, once she had recovered from her fright. People asked if she was certain, or if she had not imagined it. "That I may drop dead if it's not true," she said, putting her hand to the gray wool cardigan that covered her sunken bosom.



The inappropriateness of this was more than they could stomach. After all, she was a widow, and she was a woman in her forties, who ought to know better. Neighbors began to watch more carefully, especially at night, to see how many lights went on in the upstairs rooms—to see if they had separate bedrooms or were living in mortal sin. The less censorious said it was a flash in the pan and soon he would have another beauty in tow, so that all, all were flabbergasted the morning Bridget stood in the doorway of the shop and announced her engagement. To prove it, a lozenge of blue shimmered on her finger, and her eyes were dancing as the people gaped at her.

Before long, Bridget bought a car, and Michael gave her driving lessons on the Dock Road, the very road where her husband had walked to his death. Michael stopped soliciting young girls, even the young buttermaker in the creamery, and told strangers how happy he was, and that up to now all the women he had known were mere bonbons, and that this was *It.*

Her happiness was too much for



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people to take; they called her a hussy, they predicted another breach of promise, they waited for the downfall. Some of the older women went to the parish priest about it, but when they arrived the parish priest was in such a grump about the contributions toward a new altar that he told them to pull their socks up and try to raise money by selling cakes and jellies and things at a bazaar. He suspected why they had come, because the creamery manager had gone to him alone, and stayed an hour, and no doubt gave him a substantial offering for Masses.

To put a good complexion on the engagement period, a youngster was brought to Bridget's house from the country, a boy so daft that he dug up the tubers of the irises in mistake for onions—in short, no chaperon. They were to be married in December, which left Bridget two months to pack up her job and prepare her trousseau. She was always to be seen flying in her red car now, a menace to pedestrians and cattle that strayed on the roadside. To ingratiate herself, as they said, she offered people lifts to the city, or offered to do errands for them. Some, being weak, accepted these favors, but not the diehards. A few of the men, it is true, praised her, said what spunk she had. She was much older than Michael, and, moreover, she had got him off the booze; he only drank wine now—table wine.

A week before the wedding, the pair went to the local pub, which they had got out of the habit of doing, and stood drinks to everyone. The shopkeeper, proposing the toast, said he knew that Biddy and Michael had everyone's blessing. People clapped, then someone sang. Then Biddy, being a little tipsy, tapped her glass with her engagement stone and said she was going to give a little recitation. Without further ado, she stood up, smiled that sort of urchin smile of hers, ran her tongue over her lips, another habit, and recited a poem entitled "People Will Talk." It was a lunge at all those mischievous, prurient people who begrudged her her little flourish. It may have been—indeed, many people said that it was—this audacious provocation that wreaked the havoc of the next weeks. Had she confided in a few local women, she might have been saved, but she did not confide; she stood aloof with her man, her eyes gleaming, her happiness assured.

IT never came to light who exactly had begun it, but suddenly the word went round, the skeleton that had been lurking for years—that her husband had not drowned by accident, he had taken his own life. His predicament, it was said, was so grinding that he saw no way out of it. He went down to the docks that evening, after yet another hideous row with her, pen and paper in his pocket, and wrote his farewell note. It was in his trousers pocket before they handed it to her. Why else had she roared for three days, they asked, and why was she unfit to attend her own husband's funeral or the High Mass? Why else did she recover so soon but that she was a wicked, heartless harlot? The creamery manager, they predicted, would be a scapegoat once the marriage vows were exchanged. First one person whispered it, then another, and then another; the story slipped from house to house, from mouth to mouth, and before long it reached Bridget's appalled ears. As if that were not shock enough, she received one morning an anonymous letter saying that her husband-to-be would know of her skeleton shortly. She flung the letter into the stove, then tried in vain to retrieve it. Luckily, Michael was still upstairs, asleep in his own room. It was then that she made her first mistake—she ran around trying to bribe people, asking them not to mention this terrible rumor, not to tell the creamery manager, for God's sake not to tell. The more she tried to quash the talk, the more people concluded her guilt. She lost all composure. She could be seen in her bare feet or in her nightgown running up the road to meet the postman, to ward off any other dreadful bulletins.

After that morning, she dared not let Michael go anywhere alone, in case someone told him. She knew, or at least clung to the belief, that no one at work would risk telling him, for fear of being fired on the spot. But in the street or on the way to Mass or at the pub—these were the danger zones, and for weeks she followed him everywhere, so that he began to show signs of impatience and said that she was a hairy

Molly, clinging to him. Her looks, which had improved since the engagement, took a turn for the worse, and she was what she once had been—a scraggy older woman, with thin hair and skin that was much too yellow.

Michael saw that she was distraught, but did not understand it. It seems he told the young buttermaker that his missus had got the jitters and the sooner they got married the better. Even while he was saying this, his missus-to-be was grasping at any straw. She confided in the shopkeeper, who advised her to tell Michael, but she broke down and even flared up, mistrusting her one friend. "Why not take the bull by the horns and tell him straight out?" he had said. She couldn't. He would jilt her. Had he not already jilted a younger and comelier girl, and was she, Bridget, not haunted by that same prospect? It was then that she remembered the old woman who had lived across the road from her husband and herself and had later moved back to the country. She would go to find this woman, who would swear that she had never heard a voice raised, and that in fact Bridget and her first husband used to sit in the sun porch in the evening, among the geraniums and the begonias, whispering, holding hands, canoodling.

THEN a little respite came. Michael decided to go home to his own folks for a week, and that was a godsend. They would then meet in Limerick, with a small sprinkling of relatives, and there they would be married in the Augustinian church. One of the friars was a friend of Michael's, and he had already made the arrangements. Because of the breach-of-promise episode, it was going to be a very hushed-up affair.

Before leaving, Michael tackled her. He sat her in the little armchair by the kitchen stove, where they had often, so often, joked and cuddled. He asked her if perhaps she was having second thoughts about things, if perhaps she did not love him. Her eyes filled up with tears. She said, "No, no, Michael . . . no." She was so in love, she confessed, that she was afraid that it would go wrong. Then he kissed her and reproved her for being a daft little hen of a woman, and they waltzed around the kitchen, promising things that they would do when they were married, like putting a skylight in the kitchen, and getting a new range so that she did not have to dirty her fingers with the ashes and clinkers. He loved her little hands, he said, and he kissed them. "Num, num," he said, as if he were eating them, as if they were jam tarts.

As she told the shopkeeper later, they had a blissful farewell. He tried to coax out of her what she was planning to wear at the wedding, but she sang dumb. "I sang dumb," she said, and described how she ran upstairs to get the old fox collar, with its little foxy snout and beady eyes, and threatened him with it, went "Yap, yap, yap." They played hide-and-seek, they laughed, they teased one another, but on no account would she allow him into the room where her trousseau was stored—her voile gown and her satin shoes, and her piles of new undies, and the fleecy bed jacket. Their farewell was so tender that Michael even debated if he should cancel his journey. "God blast it, I'm over twenty-one," he said. But she persuaded him to go, insisted. She knew it was essential that he be away from this place, where any mischief-maker could say, "I believe your intended wife drove her first husband to his death." She could not risk it. There was something about Michael, although she never told him this, that reminded her of her first husband: They were both childlike and affectionate, and they both had gruff tempers but were quick to apologize—to lay a bar of chocolate or a gift on the pillow as an appeasement. She loved them in much the same way—the same gushing, bubbly, childish way that she had loved at twenty—and, miraculously, her love was reciprocated.

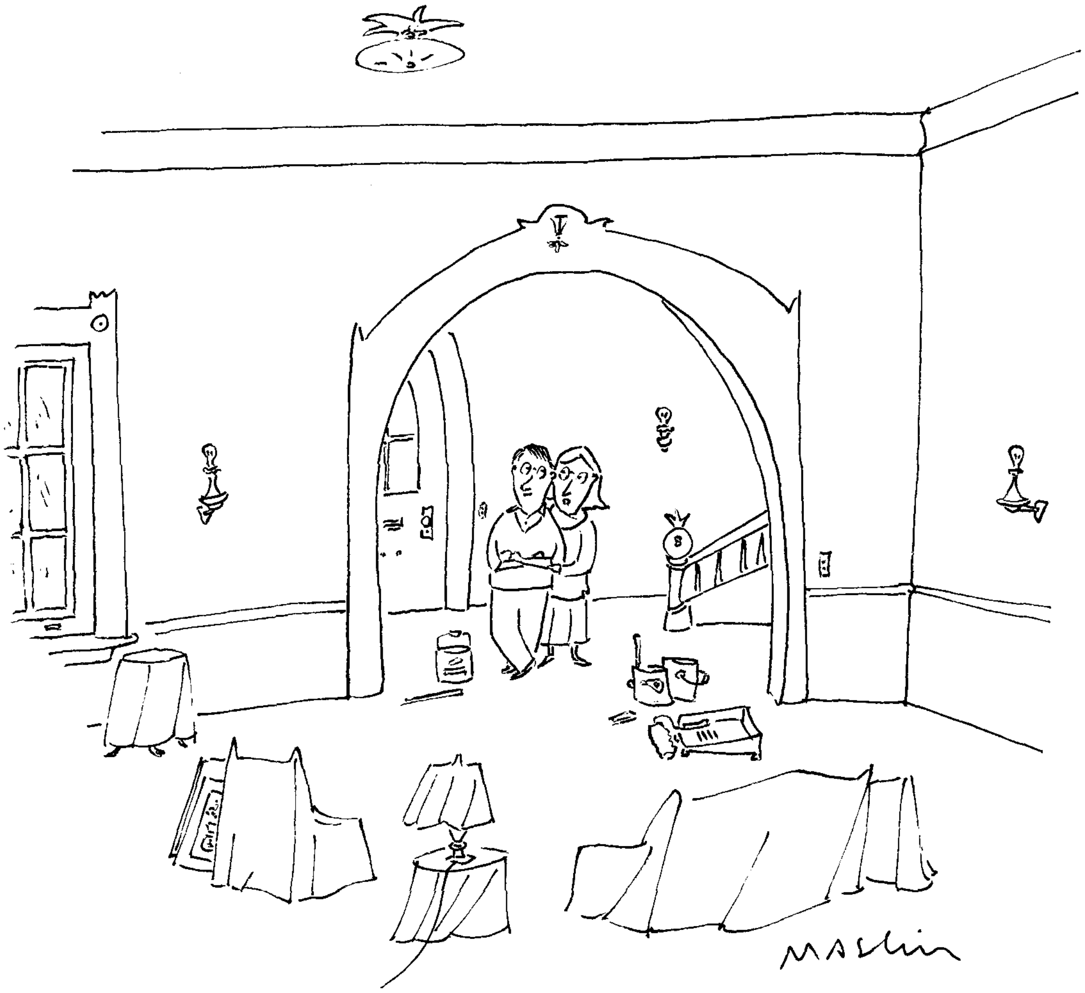
THE day after he left, Bridget set out to see the old woman. She was cheerful in the town when she stopped to buy petrol. She even told the young attendant that she was thinking of throwing a party, and asked if he would like to come. "Deffo" was what he claimed to have said.

No one of us ever knew what

"Jump-start?"

ensued with the old woman, because it was on the way back that it happened. It was a treacherous bit of road, always known to be; it twisted, then straightened, then forked suddenly and ridged under a thick canopy of beech trees. Lorries and cars had crashed there so often that people said there was a curse on that stretch. A witch had once lived nearby—a witch who defied the hierarchy and plied strange pagan cures. People wondered if the aftermath of this witch was not the cause of all these disasters, and holy water had been sprinkled there many a time by the priests.

It was after dark when the accident happened. Bridget had gone to the old woman, and afterward had gone to a hotel in the nearest town and treated herself to a drink. It may have been that she went to the hotel to celebrate, to taste for the first time the joy, as well as the certainty, of her future. Maybe the old woman had said, "I'll tell them how happy you and Bill were," or had cried, remembering that other time, when she was not old, when she did not have cataracts in her eyes, when the nice young couple invited her across the road for a glass of stout or a cup of tea. Or maybe the old woman had forgotten almost everything and just held her hand and stared. Whatever took place was never known, but in the hotel where Bridget drank the gin-and-lime and bought the crisps she chattered with the owner and asked him for his card, saying that she would be coming back there with her husband for a dinner. The locality, she said, was lucky for her, and she felt she owed it a little recompense. Half an hour later, she was around a tree, the car up on its hind legs, like an animal, her face on the dashboard, askew, her eyes wide open.



"Let's do more than just repaint—let's marbleize."

Some workmen who had been tarring the road heard the screech of the crash, and ran from a little caravan where they were cooking supper. None of them knew her. Two stayed while the third went to the lodge of a big house to ask to use the telephone. The woman in the gate lodge was a bit strange and did not want to let them in, so they had to go up to the big house, and quite a long time passed before the ambulance and the guards came. But the consensus was that she had died on the spot. She was brought back to the local hospital, where a young nurse laid her out in white. The mourners who came the next day were surprised, even aghast, that her face was so beautifully smooth, without cuts or gashes. It was makeup, they claimed, perfect makeup, and what a scandalous thing to adorn a corpse.

Michael knelt beside her and roared intemperately, as she had once roared, leaving no one in doubt that he loved her passionately. At the grave he tried to talk to her, tried to stop them from lowering the coffin. He knew everything now; he knew her plight and was helpless to do anything about it. She had quite a large funeral, but beneath the prayers and the murmurs were the whispers of how drunk she had been when she got into that car. They said her face had been disfigured, but that some silly nurse had made her look presentable, had doctored the truth, sent her to her Maker with this monstrous camouflage—some chit of a nurse, as wayward as Bridget herself had been.

—EDNA O'BRIEN

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ERRATA WE NEVER FINISHED READING

[*From "Poetry Pilot," published by the Academy of American Poets*]

ERRATA

We wish to report two typographical errors which appeared in the October issue in Donald Justice's essay on Henri Coulette. On page 4, William Desmond Taylor's name should be *Tanner,* not Turner, and . . .

HERE I AM

PENNSYLVANIA. There. Here. Staying in my mother's farmhouse. Yet again. I cannot count the times I have gone back over these years since 1950—by train from college, by car from New York and New England, and now most commonly by airplane, often on the way back from somewhere else.

My mother is old; she has not been well. This summer she fell in the kitchen, and the fall hurt her back and abdomen and has taken something out of her. She has taken to her bed, and says it is too painful to get up and walk around.

I don't know quite what to do about her. "She lives *alone*?" people ask me, with round eyes and an implication of filial neglect. In this conservative region, family members tend to stick close to one another. Four generations of Mennonites live all together on the neighboring farm. I am waiting for her to tell me what to do about her. I find that the older she becomes, the more my image of her is of someone young: the young mother in the Shillington back yard with the fireflies and flowering cherry trees, the tall laughing college girl posing with my father in his football sweater, and even the little girl raised on this farm with a batch of complaining and ailing old people. She taught herself from books to name the birds and flowers, setting out a little wildflower garden under a black birch tree that, grown thick and lopsided, is still there, though now only weeds grow beneath it—weeds and wild raspberries and a few scraggly Japanese lanterns brought from the Shillington yard forty years ago. When she was very small, my mother once settled herself in a basket of clean wash in imitation of a nesting robin, and was scolded by her mother for it. An only child, like me, she made her paradise, her escape hatch, out of the nature around her. Her diary, kept sporadically over the years, takes note of the weather and the songs of the birds, returning year after year, as they sound in the woods to the west, through whose branches the red sun sets. During these more than a dozen years since my father died, her voice over the telephone has always sounded young—quick and playful and interested in life, in the reality modulated by our "vocabulary," by our slant on the world. I am alarmed and depressed by what seems her withdrawal from the world—she stopped, after her fall, cooking, driving, watching television, writing, reading, and eating. All she manages to do is feed the dog and the cats and talk on the telephone to her well-wishers and to the numerous charity fund-raisers who call up relentlessly from Reading, asking an annual renewal of her widow's mite of ten or fifteen dollars. There is no end of giving.

Her will to live, anciently involved with mine, has been slowly reviving this autumn. Tonight she let herself be driven out to dinner with some friends from Lancaster. Now we have returned, adjusted the dog and the thermostat, and gone to bed. Our bedrooms have between them a wall and door so thin we can hear each other breathe. My wife wonders how five of us once managed in this little house, all sleeping in this same upstairs, and all I can say is that at the time, to the child I was, it seemed big enough. My parents and grandparents each had a room, and I slept in a bed in a space that served also as a kind of hall at the head of the stairs. There were voices, true—coughs and sighs and snoring, bedsprings creaking and the sound of my father patting my mother and making a humorous woo-woo noise that signified affection; but when one is young space curls up tight inside the blankets and it is not so hard to fall asleep through the hole that opens at the bottom of one's brain.

Now it is harder. I am old, though not as old as my mother. It was not easy for me to drive her back from the restaurant, through an unseasonable sleet storm, early in this November. The wipers struggled against the freezing rain, the headlights coming at us were smeared and magnified, and she had been fearful that I was going to hit a deer, because deer did now and then cross this dark highway. Without saying so, I found her repeated concern rather sentimental and hysterical, especially since the deer would be slaughtered in hunting season, less than a month away. Now the sleet patters on the windows and makes a crinkling sound in the fireplace as the individual pellets tumble through, into the room. It would be cozy if the bed were not so cold, unwarmed by a woman. My wife stays away, as a gift, she says, to my mother. The room has two windows, a low ceiling, this never used fireplace, and wallpaper, patterned with rosettes and little pink roses, that hasn't changed since I can remember. Even the decorative changes are slow: an uncompleted oil painting I did of my first wife was retired to a drawer around the time of our divorce, and more recently a felt piece of local kitsch I always disliked has been taken down. It showed an Amishman standing erect with a hammer and a carpenter's square above the slogan "WHAT A MAN DOES, THAT HE IS." I believe it but didn't like reading it. My suitcase is spread open across two straight chairs, and a Harvard yearbook and an early Peter Arno cartoon anthology sit on a bedside table; these books never change, and in the table's drawer are pencils so old their erasers don't erase and even the graphite has gone waxy and refuses to write. Time moves slowly here but does move, and is overtaking my mother. Which visit will be my last? We do not know, or speculate. I can hear her breathe, with the loudness that signifies sleep.

THE drive home from the restaurant, the unseasonable sleet, and my entire life all rankle in me. I have come here from some Midwestern university where I read and talked into a microphone and was gracious to the local rich, the English faculty and college president, and the students, with their clear skins and shining eyes and inviting innocence, like a blank surface one wishes to scribble obscenities on. I need these excursions, evidently: they reassure me that I don't stutter, or stutter too much. They leave me feeling dirty and disturbed, as though I have wasted this time away from my desk, posing as an author instead of being one, and it is hard to get back from the academic unreality and ponderous flattery into my own skin. These leftover feelings are complicated by the sensations of enchantment and claustrophobia that occupy me now in this little overfamiliar room, surrounded by musty memories and the whisper of sleet and the sounds of my mother and the dog sleeping. My light is on and I feel this as a discordant note in the countryside; Plowville, once so empty that not another house light could be seen from our house, is being invaded by developments. The farms are being broken up into two-acre lots. The thousands of acres between here and Morgantown once owned by Bethlehem Steel, and kept as forest against the potential exploitation of their low-grade iron ore, have been sold to a Chester County developer who has visions of golf courses and amusement parks and incinerators that will turn all of Philadelphia's trash into smoke. A raw new development begins on the other side of my mother's meadow, which she has not been able to mow this fall, since her injuries prevent her from getting up on the tractor. I can see its lights through my window, whose sash rattles. By my bedside light I am reading a book for review: book reviewing is another superfluous chore that I do, like the public readings, for the money and for the easy exposure of it, the showing off, the quick certification from a world that I fear is not paying enough attention to me.

I rub my face. My forehead, full of actinic damage from years of seeking the sun, hurts. My public, marketable self—the self put on display in interviews and slightly "off" caricatures in provincial book-review sections, the book-autographing, anxious-to-please me—feels like another skin and hurts also. I look over at my younger self on the wall: a photograph taken in Earl Snyder's studio on Penn Street when I was five, wearing a kind of sailor collar, the edges blurred away—"vignetted"—in old-fashioned studio style, an image cherished by my mother, nicely framed the workmanlike way they do things in Reading, and always hanging here, in this spot, for me to admire and remember. Little Johnny, his tentatively smiling mouth, his dark and ardent and hopeful eyes. For a second he looks evil. He has got me into this.

In this room, with its cold clammy bed and cobwebbed corners and sandstone fireplace hearth, I have often on these visits had asthma, so that I slept only a few hours and woke with a pulse racing from repeated use of isoproterenol. But my asthma, like my stuttering, seems to be less a factor as the actualities of aging overtake me and the shadows lengthen around my walk in the sun. Earlier today, we had driven into Shillington, so my mother could visit her doctor. The doctor's office, as it happens, is next to the movie theatre where I had spent hours, hours every week, as a child. The theatre has closed; to see a movie in Berks County now, one must go to a shopping mall. The marquee bears the unchanging advertisement "GRACE FELLOWSHIP": the building has become a church. Across Lancaster Avenue, the big orange brick duplex that had held Stephens' Luncheonette and the post office and, next door to it, the taller, older, graver building where my father and the treasurer of the school board would count money after a football game have been joined by a new, unharmonious structure in what had always been a vacant lot or generous side yard. My mother's doctor's office is in another new building, on a site where, when I was a child, travelling fairs would set up their rides and stalls. One of the few times I ever sat in a saddle was on this land, at such a fair; I was small and seemed appallingly high up, on a huge warm smelly rough-haired nervous thing, though the animal was a mere pony, led by a boy not much older than I.

After the visit to the doctor, my mother and I had driven down Lancaster Avenue to the area of the Poorhouse Lane, now a shopping mall one of whose attractions was a medical center where she could have her blood drawn for some tests. Her young doctor seemed determined to keep her alive. As her arm, its dry skin extra loose from her weight loss since her fall, was pierced, she engaged in one of her

Bernard Schoenbaum

"I understand it's family-owned and run."

THE BATHROBE

On his last birthday, my father's wife
gave him a big yellow bathrobe she had
sewed herself—heaps of terry cloth
curling on the table for weeks, gold terry chaff
falling slowly through the air. Now he could
get rid of that old robe,
brown and speckled, short, that he was always
pulling down over his knees—it
rippled like caterpillar skin. I was there when she
gave him the new one, laid the box on his
lap and took off the top for him. "Now
what could it be!" he cried. "I wonder what
color it is!" We were beaming at each other,
we knew what was going on, we were in love
and he'd be dead soon. He didn't take it
out of the box, it was awfully heavy,
thick yolk-yellow robe, it looked
thirsty and half alive. He just sat
pulling the old robe down
over his shapely legs, and then on its
own it would ride up those long thighs,
dark curtain on the rise. When he died
she gave me the big, fresh robe,
never worn—she wanted it to
slough some cells his cells had made, to
drink the sweat of his child. I wear it
all the time, it's wonderfully huge and
dumpy, the sleeves are wide and their tips
hang down into everything,
stews, suds, cups of tea, I keep
wetting them and darkening them as if
dipping my father back down
gently into matter. In the mirror I see a
big kid in her dad's clothes,
happy and proud, the way as a child I'd play
Mary, stuffing the bosom of a grownup
robe and hauling my baby around the
Holy Land of the house, passing my
father unconscious on the couch, ochre
lion of the desert. I always wanted to
pick him up and carry him, get in his
loose, bright skin and walk him till he woke.

—Sharon Olds

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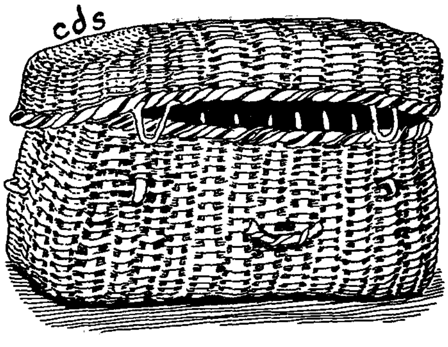
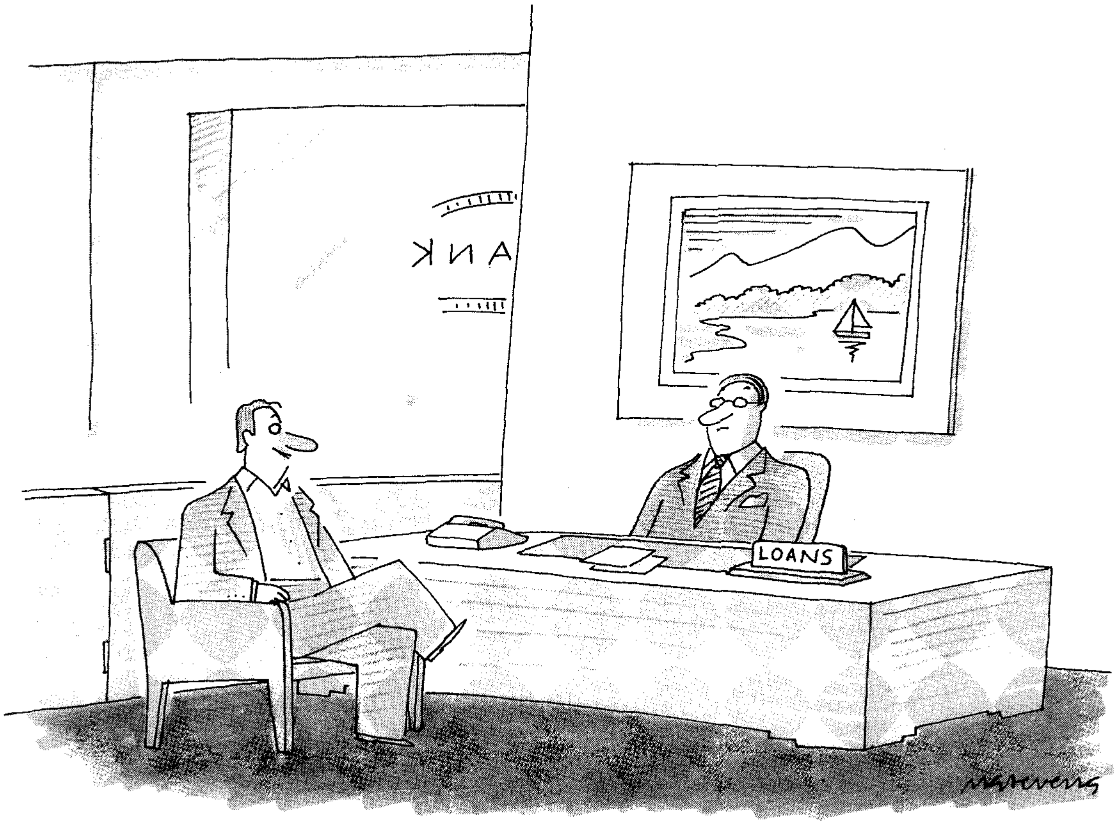
flirtatious, slightly baffling exchanges with the nurse; how like, it now seemed, my father she was, spontaneously grappling with strangers, aggressively seeking contact in inappropriate places. In my embarrassment I wandered off and pondered the marvellous devices offered in this medical center for the use and easement of old age—canes and braces and pans and wheelchairs, and toilet seats thickened like a clubfoot's shoe, and long canelike pincers to retrieve what can no longer be bent over for: a veritable armory as complex as a medieval knight's, our grail now simply the indefinite prolongation of life.

And then in this medical center, astoundingly, a miracle of sorts had occurred. In came a living relic of my Shillington boyhood—Reverend Rhoads, who had been, with Reverend Kroninger, one of the two pillars of the local Protestant clergy, the pastor of the Reformed Church up New Holland Avenue, a frequent and orotund speaker at high-school assemblies and civic observances. Under the impact of old age, his face had, as it were, exploded into separate elements—plump cheeks, button nose, mottled forehead, thick throat wattles—but his voice was still vibrant and his eyes alert behind their bifocals; and his wife, in all these years that had flowed by since I left Shillington, had turned white-haired but remained handsome and even frisky, with good, trim ankles and a dazzling broad smile. She told me she remembered watching my mother carry me up New Holland Avenue. Did she mean carrying me in her arms, or carrying me in her womb? I tried to picture my mother, a young woman walking about town at the outset of the Depression, her husband still off with the phone company, the automobiles in the street dark and boxy, the porches and brick housefronts of Shillington much then as they are now, and New Holland Avenue then, as now, slanting up to the cemetery and the tree-lined lane that led to Cedar Top, past the Dives Estate. In this remoteness of time I had been somehow present, and the Rhoadses, and my mother, and here we all still were, standing in a geriatric emporium where once there had been a cornfield you could see from the trolley car, part of the poor farm. It seemed surpassingly wonderful. Our bodies since that earlier conjunction had been considerably worked upon by time—mine enlarged and strengthened, theirs somewhat shrunken and enfeebled, but *here* we all were, quite animated in our ten minutes of pleasantries.



The Rhoadses' son, Bobby, had been two grades ahead of me in school and often stood with me in the Shillington playground roof-ball line. Indeed, a photograph of such a line exists. Bobby had inherited his father's position as the town's Reformed minister, in a new church built on a street that hadn't existed until the nineteen-fifties. My having moved away, first eleven miles and then hundreds, made the small town of my boyhood seem more remote than it really was—a mere fraction of a lifetime away, a ship sinking so slowly that many survivors still had their heads above water. Karl Barth, another Reformed clergyman, responding in an interview late in his life to a question about the afterlife, said he imagined it as somehow *this life* in review, viewed in a new light. I had not been as comforted as I wanted to be. For is it not the *singularity* of life that terrifies us? Is not the decisive difference between comedy and tragedy that tragedy denies us another chance? Shakespeare over and over demonstrates life's singularity—the irrevocability of our decisions, hasty and even mad though they be. How solemn and huge and deeply pathetic our life does loom in its once-and-doneness, how inexorably linear, even though our rotating, revolving planet offers us the cycles of the day and of the year to suggest that existence is intrinsically cyclical, a playful spin, and that there will always be, tomorrow morning or the next, another chance.



"I've heard a lot __about__ money, and now I'd like to try some."

I HEAR my mother turn and breathe in her bed. The sleet sprinkles in the fireplace and a mouse scrabbles behind the baseboard beneath the table and the picture of me as a pretty child. My mother knows this mouse; she has told me that in the darkest of her post-fall, bedridden days he, the mouse, used to come into her bedroom and, standing right there on the floor beside the baseboard, vigorously make noises, trying to tell her something. His attempt to offer advice amuses her in the telling and she does not yet have the heart, or perhaps the muscular strength, to set a trap for him.

So here I lie in this damp old Pennsylvania farmhouse listening to an animated mouse. My first artistic love and inspiration was Mickey Mouse—his piping voice, his yellow shoes, his nimble skill on any sort of musical instrument, his patience with Goofy and his courage against Peg Leg Pete, and the way his face would come bursting into the Shillington Movie Theatre, radiating golden beams to the edges of the screen—and I have taken that jubilant commercial inspiration further than most of my fellow-Shillingtonians would have predicted. But perhaps with an undue effort, with an attenuated result. My life behind me feels rickety. My sleeping mother and I seem to be out on a precarious, swaying limb. The house rustles and sighs. I feel up in the air, scared. In our chance encounter, the Rhoadses told me how much I resembled my mother, and I felt slightly offended, as though an intimate secret were being advertised. Standing there in the bright medical center, I was aware of my mother's white hair and of all the spots of actinic damage mottling her skin, which had once been as smooth and fair as the boy's in the picture. My mother was my future as well as my past.

Now the dog heaves in its sleep, woofing at some dream-prey, its claws scratching on the soft old pine floorboards. Sleep will not come for me. The house is too noisy, the bed clammy as though I were already dead. I cannot escape myself. The sleet, the fear that we will hit a deer keep revolving in me. My brain buzzes with selfish, scared thoughts. We fall asleep in selflessness, when our thoughts turn self-forgetful. Masturbation and prayer both attempt this; I feel too old for either. I feel forsaken, lost. But when I am not looking, perhaps when I am thinking of the dog's dreams or of the old roof-ball line at the playground, sleep does come.

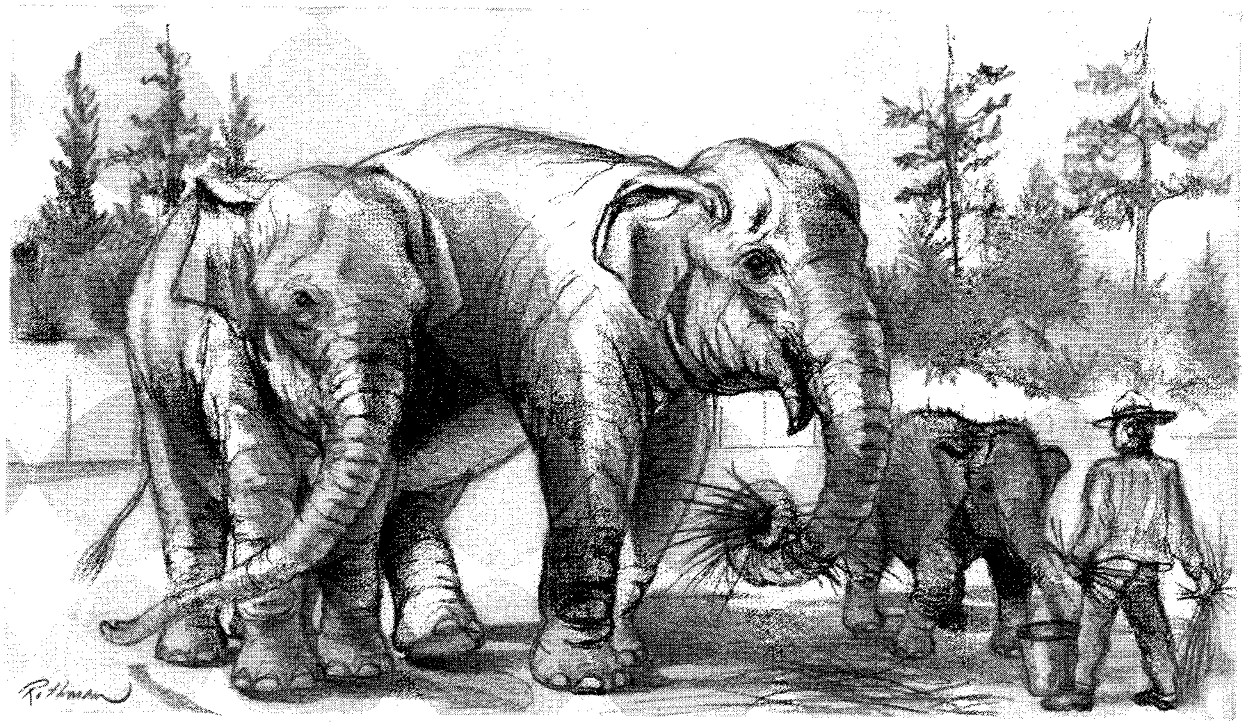
I awake in light, feeling as if my soul had a slight sore throat, my membranes still chafed by the fear of earthly existence. I hear my mother and the dog talking downstairs. She is recovered enough now from her fall to get out of bed in the morning and go downstairs and make breakfast. She has turned on television, which rumbles with the barely suppressible urgency of a new day begun, in Philadelphia and nationally. The morning light gives the pale wallpaper a deep exciting sheen, a subtle luminosity from beneath the surface.

It has snowed during the night; through the window, as I rise to dress and shave, I see an inch or two of snow on the still green lawn, and on the boughs of the pine tree holding the bird feeder. In this low-ceilinged room the light is antique, preserved and brought from the Shillington house, my first tender, childish winters in it, with their evergreen secret of Christmas. The light holds my first inklings of celebration, of reindeer tracks on the roof, of an embowering wide world arranged for my mystification and entertainment. It has the eggshell tint, the chilly thrilling taste, of my self.

—JOHN UPDIKE

A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE ONLY HARMLESS GREAT THING



THE best time to watch the elephants at the Washington Park Zoo is in the early hours of a sunny day, when their bulky bodies cast wide, dark shadows in the bright, transparent sunshine. The elephants are more energetic in the morning, more likely to wrestle in one of the wading pools or sing in a frequency that I can hear. (A variety of elephant calls are pitched too low for human ears.) The elephant barn, a complex of chambers and yards partly surrounded by a dry moat, is at the far end of the zoo, tucked along a curving terrace carved from a steep hill on the west side of Portland, Oregon. The largest of the yards, at the back of the complex, is separated by the moat from a small railroad track, travelled every half hour by the open-air zoo train, on its way to the Alaskan tundra and back to the bear grottoes; on the slope beyond the track is a thick stand of fir, vine maple, and alder, tangled with ivy and ferns and hiding from the elephants' sight a neat Japanese garden, tiers of award-winning roses, and a cluster of distant skyscrapers. I like the crowds in the morning, too: most of the people pressed against the glass wall of the viewing room are young mothers with children in strollers; on a hillock above the moat, toddlers waddle beside a wood-and-wire fence, oblivious of the giants below.

These are Asian elephants, slightly smaller than their African cousins and, I think, more diffident. The Asian and the African elephant not only are separate species but belong to separate genera, and are the only surviving members of the order Proboscidea, which once covered much of the planet and may have included more than three hundred species. The genesis of the modern elephant is, in fact, a point of debate; its evolutionary tree is filled with dozens of branches that failed to bloom. On the basis of the sometimes obscure elements of taxonomy, the elephant's closest living relatives are the hyrax, a furry rodentlike animal; the rotund ocean-dwelling manatee and dugong; and the aardvark.

The Asian elephant has smaller ears than the African, one rather than two "fingers" on the tip of its trunk, a long narrow face under a giant domed skull of airy bone. The Asian has smaller tusks, if any; the popular image of the elephant—huge ears flung wide, long rails of ivory below the face—is of the African. But it is Asians we see, as the centerpiece of circuses and in zoos. They are considered far easier to train—more amenable and less skittish. The Asian has been the elephant of domestic life all the years of recorded history and is sacred in many religions. It is still used as a work animal in India, Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand. According to trainers, the Asian is more willing to enter the intimate, emotionally complex relationship that domesticity requires. Pliny the Elder ascribed to the elephant the senses of modesty, shame, and delight, and in this herd—the most prolific herd of elephants in the Western Hemisphere, with twenty-four births in twenty-six years—I imagine a sense of style, too. Even in the spacious, sandy back yard, they move with a jungle delicacy.

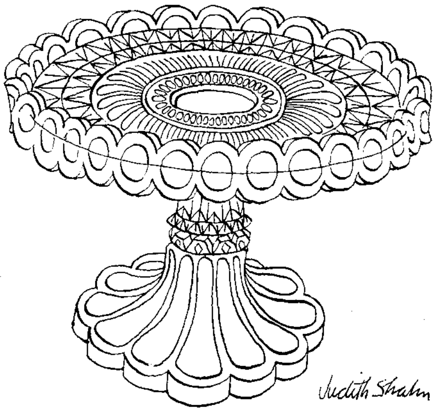
It has taken me a while to learn to distinguish one elephant from another—by noting the pattern of pink freckling on their ears, the number of creases on the lower leg (a kind of fingerprint), and the angle and set of the ears, which are shaped like ginkgo leaves. Elephants rarely stand completely still; they pass among each other, lean, touch, and blend into a single, soft contour. The trunk, which is both nose and upper lip (it is also the elephant's hand, with control fine enough to pick up a dime), never rests; it waves slowly, restlessly about. A few in the herd of eleven are easy for me to spot: Tunga, a bull, because he is the only one with tusks (they are banded in brass); Rosy, the oldest cow, who has a pleasing shape and the balance of an elder; Belle, a few years younger, who has the wrinkles. The elephants scratch themselves—foot to knee, head against pillar—and caress each other with their heads and trunks, and all this motion is oddly quiet. The elephant foot is encased in a fatty pad, and it is this wide cushion that makes elephants so silent and stealthy in the wild. They can pass undetected a short distance away from people, even at an easy lope. When standing, elephants swing their front legs one in front of the other in perfect time; sometimes two elephants will rock in rhythm, heads swaying in counterpoint to the beat.

I think it is a human trait to exaggerate difference—to imagine an odd thing as odder than it really is. I expected, when I first met elephants, to have exaggerated their size in my imagination. But elephants are so big, so much bigger than any other creature we meet on land, that I found the opposite to be true: I had actually reduced them in my mind, diminished their size and their difference. Up close, within reach, an elephant is a transcendent thing, entirely alien. Elephants resemble us in funny ways—they catch colds, get sunburns, babysit each other's children. Rosy and I even have the same body temperature. But I am really nothing like Rosy, and she is nothing like me; still, as I watch her and her kin pass by, my strongest feeling is one of society and relation.

At Washington Park, the elephants are guests, family, and royalty; they are by far the most popular animals on exhibit. One morning in early June, I watched as Sunshine, a five-year-old adolescent cow, bullied Chang Dee, the herd's only calf, into fetching a ball from the wading pool in the front yard; she shoved the bristly-haired, short-trunked baby toward the edge of the water until he tumbled in. The mothers and cousins nearby ignored the children, and threw leaves of lettuce on their own and each other's backs, using each other as tables. In the back yard, Hugo, a bull, paced, and dusted himself with sand, and the people leaning on the fences sighed with pleasure. He was the Elephant, in myth an earthbound rain cloud, the beloved beast known variously as God's messenger, earth's egg, the carrier of the world. But Hugo is also a research animal, as they all are, and is subject to the keepers' law. Washington Park's elephants are participants in research aimed at protecting their species from extinction; through Hugo, Sunshine, and the others, certain essential mysteries are beginning to unravel.

THE real key to recognizing elephants is personality. The keepers at Washington Park indulge in a cheerful and unapologetic anthropomorphism when discussing their charges, but this is a matter more of the conventions of language than of biological inaccuracy. All are quick to bristle at explanations of elephant behavior—such as the common assumption that Hugo dusts himself with sand in order to cool off. "We don't know why Hugo or any of them do what they do. How could we?" says Jay Haight, who has been a keeper at Washington Park for nine years. Each man brings his own degree of familiarity to each elephant, and it varies from a rude slap on the rump or a gentle stroke and whisper to a respectfully wide berth.

Between chores, the keepers tend to gather for a cigarette or a cup of coffee in the barn's central room, a huge, concrete-floored chamber with a cathedral ceiling split by skylights. This particular room, in spite of its size, isn't used by the elephants; its dominant feature is an enormous pile of timothy hay. Along one wall are a counter and a dusty, paper-strewn desk below a row of dusty cupboards; elephant cartoons are tacked on the cupboard doors. This room and the viewing room, next to it, are part of the original barn, which was completed in 1959. Behind a hydraulic door labelled with a red "DANGER" sign is a later addition: a hallway and several large rooms. One of these contains the crush, a contraption of hydraulic barred walls which is used to confine the animals—painlessly, despite the name—for care. Asian bull elephants are subject to a recurrent phenomenon of unknown purpose called musth, which lasts anywhere from a few weeks to several months (longer in healthy, well-nourished elephants like these) and is marked by violent, unpredictable behavior. This and an inveterate need to dominate are what characterize the bull. The keepers will go into a room with cows, mingle with them, many times a day; they generally approach a bull only after he is settled in the crush. Few zoos have the equipment, the experience, or the will to care for even one full-sized bull; there are three at Washington Park, thanks largely to the crush. It is not a new idea: log or bamboo cages have been used in Burmese work camps for hundreds of years. Every elephant here goes in and out of the crush nearly every day—it also functions as a door to the back yard—and each is rewarded for the trip with a bunch of carrots or bananas or an armful of hay. The thick walls of wide-spaced bars slide both horizontally and at angles, shifting noisily, with simple controls, to match the animal's form. Here the periodic footcare is done, to prevent bacterial infections and overgrowth of toenails, and here medicine, vitamins, and other medical treatment are given. It is also in the crush that the trickiest part of reproduction research—sperm collection—takes place.



I have joined the keepers in the big hay room for conversation many times, and now and then one of them will go off to do an errand: move an animal or two or three from room to room or into one or another of the yards; pass out carrots. I've been startled to hear a sudden shout of "Bull coming through!" and see, through a crack in the hallway door, a trotting elephant, head high, trunk waving toward the scent of the hay as he heads up the hall.

One day last June, I visited the keepers to discuss elephant character. They had left open a door to a little side yard fringed with bamboo and fenced off from the back yard by a concrete wall. A group of cows in the back yard came to stare at us, leaning their great gray heads over the wall, their trunks weaving from side to side. The elephants

"You're lucky he's so supportive, Leda. A lot of men would probably feel threatened if their wives laid an egg."

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will watch, sometimes for hours, the movements of the human beings nearby. Now and then, a bull will scoop up a pile of sand (and, occasionally, excrement) in the sinewy curl at the tip of his trunk and sling it at a keeper or a maintenance man. The damp sand flies out like a hail of buckshot, and is aimed with an archer's skill.

"Rosy is better than money from home," said Roger Henneous, the head keeper. He is a short man with a graying, close-cropped beard and a gruff manner, and he has worked at the Washington Park Zoo for more than twenty years. "She used to be earth mother to all the calves, but now she's had a bellyful. There's no elephant you'd rather spend time with—you could trust your child with her. Now, Belle—she is so damned hardheaded. She won't bend and acknowledge that she's getting older and everybody else is getting better. So she proceeds to get her butt whipped up on with depressing regularity by the young cows moving up. She is not going gently into that good night. And Me Tu, Rosy's daughter—that's Daughter Hog."

"Me Tu lives to eat," Haight explained. "You could put four animals together and they would not eat *as* much *as* fast as she does."

Jim Sanford, the zoo's third full-time elephant keeper, talked about his favorite, a young cow named Pet. "One of her trademarks is checking us out: 'How far can I go? How much does this guy know? Have the rules been changed?' " he told me. "It's one of the things you really like about her. I'd call it a sense of humor—she obviously gets pleasure out of seeing how much she can get away with. It slays her. I think the relationship between a human being and an elephant is based on mutual trust. They know what the rules are here. If one of us, particularly a new guy, chastises them for things that are O.K. with everybody else—well, they won't put up with it."

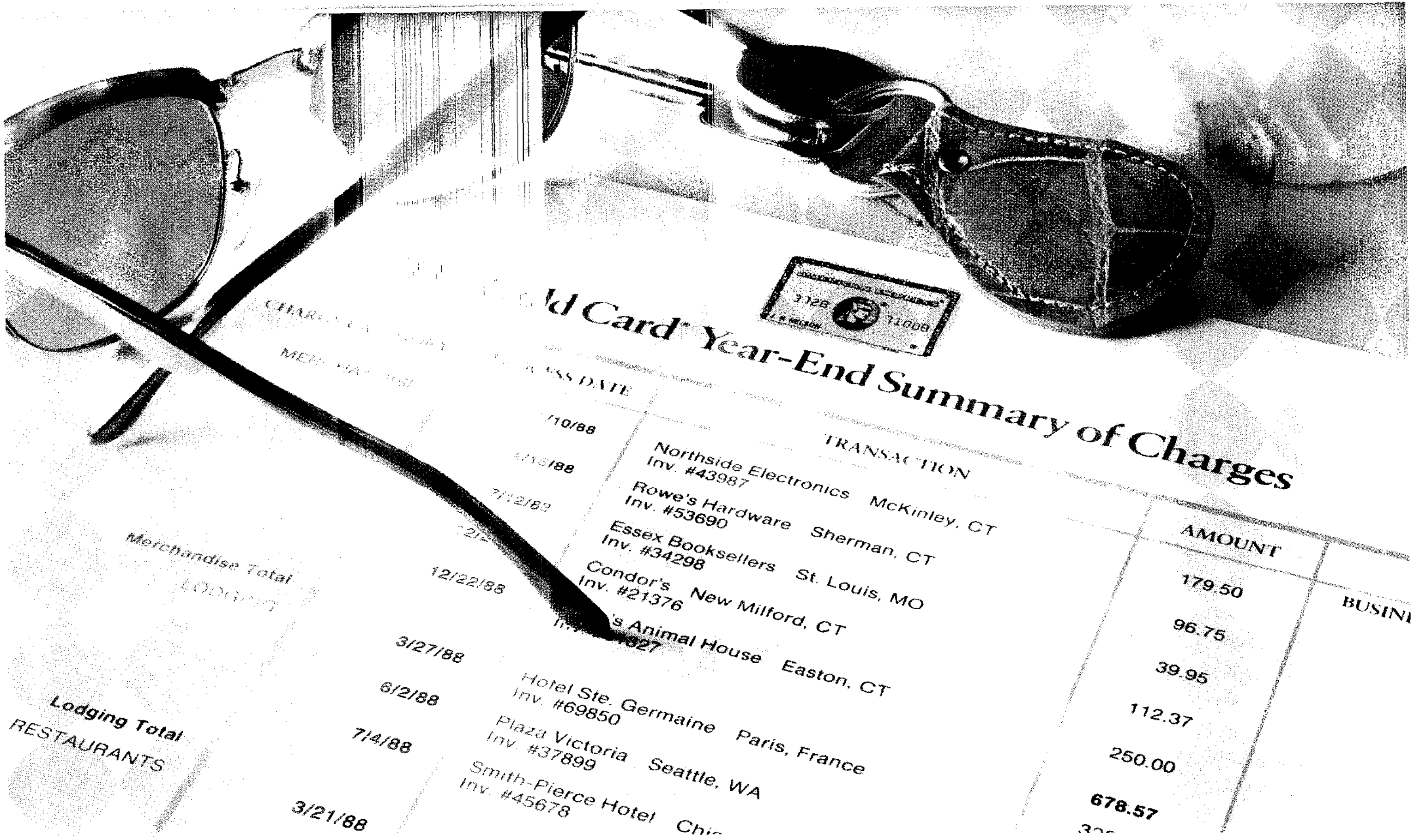
"Do they like you?" I asked.

Haight paused, considering. "Does it matter? I like *them*, but they piss me off a lot of the time. I know they're hearing me, and then suddenly it's 'I've never done this before! You can't be talking to *me!*' " He threw up his hands, mimicking elephant disbelief. "But you have to be the dominant animal. That's why the bulls come after us. If we weren't the dominant animal, they wouldn't care."

The herd's daily routine is complicated, with many comings and goings and tradings of place. Every task is punctuated with sound: the deep whoosh of an elephant's exhalation, the spray of a hose on concrete, the clang of massive hydraulic doors, the faint rustle of a scratching bull. There is sound, and there is smell—a perfume of hay and manure, and, underneath, the musky, dry, sweet smell of the elephants themselves. The air in the barn is always warm, even in this high-ceilinged central room.

Elephant cows are irrepressibly social beasts. Washington Park has two separate family herds of mothers, daughters, and female cousins. (At the time of my visits last spring and summer, Chang Dee, the male calf, was still with his mother, Me Tu. He has since gone to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, and—almost to the day—his five-year-old half uncle, Rama, returned to the herd from a four-year sojourn at the Point Defiance Zoo, in Tacoma.) The groups rotate and are sometimes split into smaller groups throughout nine available areas, eating periodically in different places. (A single mature cow will consume ninety pounds of hay, three pounds of oats, forty-six pounds each of carrots and lettuce, a handful of vitamins, a quarter cup of salt, and fifty gallons of water every day.) The three mature bulls are always separate and solitary, but during mating a cow and bull are given a private room for several days or, sometimes, are allowed the use of one of the outside yards.

With each move to a new area, the animals must examine the evidence of



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96.75

39.95

112.37

250.00

Merchandise Total

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LODGING

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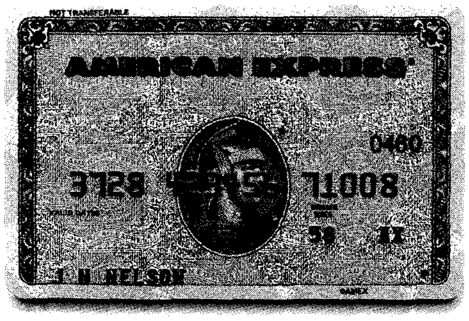

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the animals that have just left; it is in the first few moments in a yard or a room that the elephants seem to merge, recognizing and reassuring each other. To prevent boredom and to insure co-operation, the cows and calves are trained to stand, to back up, to lie down, to hold still, and to tolerate leg chains, which are necessary during feeding to prevent the dominant animals from stealing food. Both Tunga and Hugo were once show animals—Hugo belonged to the Ringling Brothers circus—and can do such tricks as walking on a ball. Chang Dee, Hugo's firstborn, was the payment the zoo made to the circus in exchange for Hugo, and was thus trained to accept leg chains from babyhood. Sunshine (her real name is Sung Surin) was taught to lie down on command—a marvel of conditioned response. In the course of a week or two, a keeper would enter the barn while Sunshine was napping and rouse her just enough to feed her a banana. When she woke from her nap, Jim Sanford says, "it was with banana on her breath and the word 'Down' in her ears."

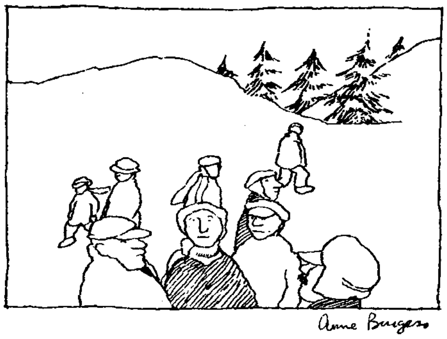
The keepers are full of such stories; they say, with a certain pride, that single-trial learning is normal in elephants. They tell long anecdotes—tales of one elephant determined to pull a door apart, another playing with an electrical heating panel, a third refusing to lift a leg for a chain—and they laugh at the elephants' cleverness and their own efforts to be a bit more clever. It is an affectionate one-upmanship; tomorrow, perhaps, the elephants will win another round.

"One day, Rog and I came back from a break, and there's Tamba, who had been with the herd in the back yard, all by herself over in the bamboo," Jay Haight recalled. At the time, Tamba, a seventeen-year-old cow born in Thailand, wasn't fully grown, and she had somehow managed to squeeze through a gap at one end of the wall between the two yards and was harvesting the bamboo, an elephant delight. "So she's really conspicuous, but as soon as she heard us coming she turned around and faced the other way, rock-still, holding her trunk in her mouth." Haight pretended to whistle, gazed at the ceiling. " 'I'm not really here, don't mind me. It's just Mr. Squirrel.' " Another time, Tunga swung one of the elephants' playthings, a chained log, over the moat, climbed out along it as if he were on a balance beam, and fell in. It was not his first such mishap: an erstwhile performer, Tunga can balance on one leg, and he was once seen to "waltz," or spin on his hind legs, around the back yard until he tripped and tumbled into the moat.

Roger Henneous believes that the elephants are well aware of their keepers' expectations. "You ought to be here on a day when the routine is hopelessly screwed up and get a look at the expressions on their faces," he said. "If they had a watch, they'd be checking it. And asking you, 'Look, buddy, what's the problem? Have you forgotten everything we ever taught you?' "

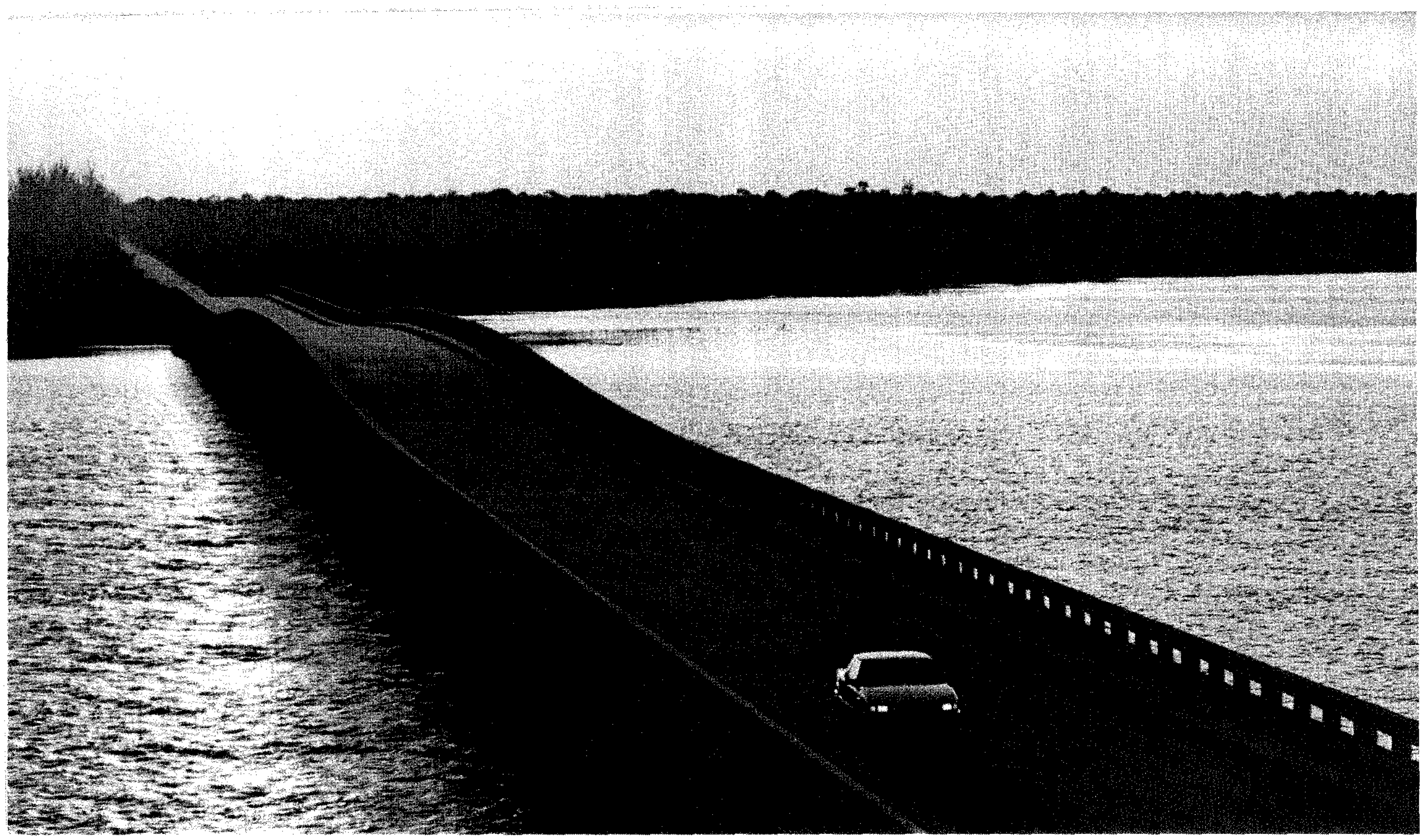
"Come on and see the big guy," Jim Sanford said, and he led me down the hall, a narrow concrete alley lined with dusty pipes, to a room with a window about three feet wide and screened with heavy wire mesh. He was referring to Packy, the undisputed master of the herd. Packy, who stands more than ten feet high and weighs thirteen thousand three hundred and twenty pounds, is the largest known Asian elephant in the world. He is only twenty-six—young for an elephant—and he will continue to grow throughout his life.

When I peered through the window, the room at first seemed empty. Then, as in a dream, I saw a trunk float by, far above my head, and then I saw a leg—a tall pillar of dirty velvet—and another, another, another. He was moving past the window with a ponderous grace, outsized. I felt that he needed not a bigger room but a bigger planet. He turned when he picked up my strange new scent, his trunk weaving a hypnotic dance against the mesh, up and down. His tushes—the upper incisors, which in Tunga had grown to tusks—were rough points against the thick wire. Several years ago, a keeper was walking past Packy, who was in a barred room. The bull casually reached through the bars with his trunk, grabbed the keeper's arm, pulled him close, and crushed the limb against the bars with his skull, splintering the bone. Even with the heavy mesh protection, that sinuous trunk is disconcerting; Packy is looking me right in the eye, in a leisurely kind of way. Out of musth, he is usually a placid boy. But he is every inch the king of all the beasts.



THERE are between twenty-five thousand and forty thousand Asian elephants left in the world. Their gradual elimination in the wild is the result of a number of changes, most of them recent and a few subtle. The invention of the chain saw, for instance, made forest-clearing much easier and quicker work. But basically there is just not enough room in Southeast Asia for both elephants and people. The elephant's jungle habitat is being replaced by cropland, and many of the crops are delectable to the now homeless elephant. The elephant raids the millet and sugarcane, and is killed for his efforts, and kills in turn: in India, nearly a hundred and fifty people are killed by elephants every year. Wild elephants are found from India to Indonesia; most inhabit shrinking parks and preserves, in shrinking populations, separated from each other by human settlements as uncrossable as an ocean. Bulls, being more aggressive, are killed far more often than cows. Not only does this deplete the gene pool but the cows' opportunities to breed grow fewer, and as the birth rate falls their mean age increases. Because elephants will feed on the youngest, tenderest trees available, finding them the most appetizing, herds quickly denude small parks beyond the point of natural recovery. Several countries, notably Thailand and India, are attempting to conserve these insular environments and to confront the problems of the diminished gene pool and male-to-female ratio, but quite a few people in elephant biology wonder whether the wild elephant is past saving. (There are estimated to be a million elephants left in Africa; however, their numbers are also dropping.) Certainly its future, one way or another, resides in zoos.

The Washington Park Zoo is a century old. Its origin dates back to a pharmacist named Richard Knight, who found himself in Portland—then still something of a frontier city—with



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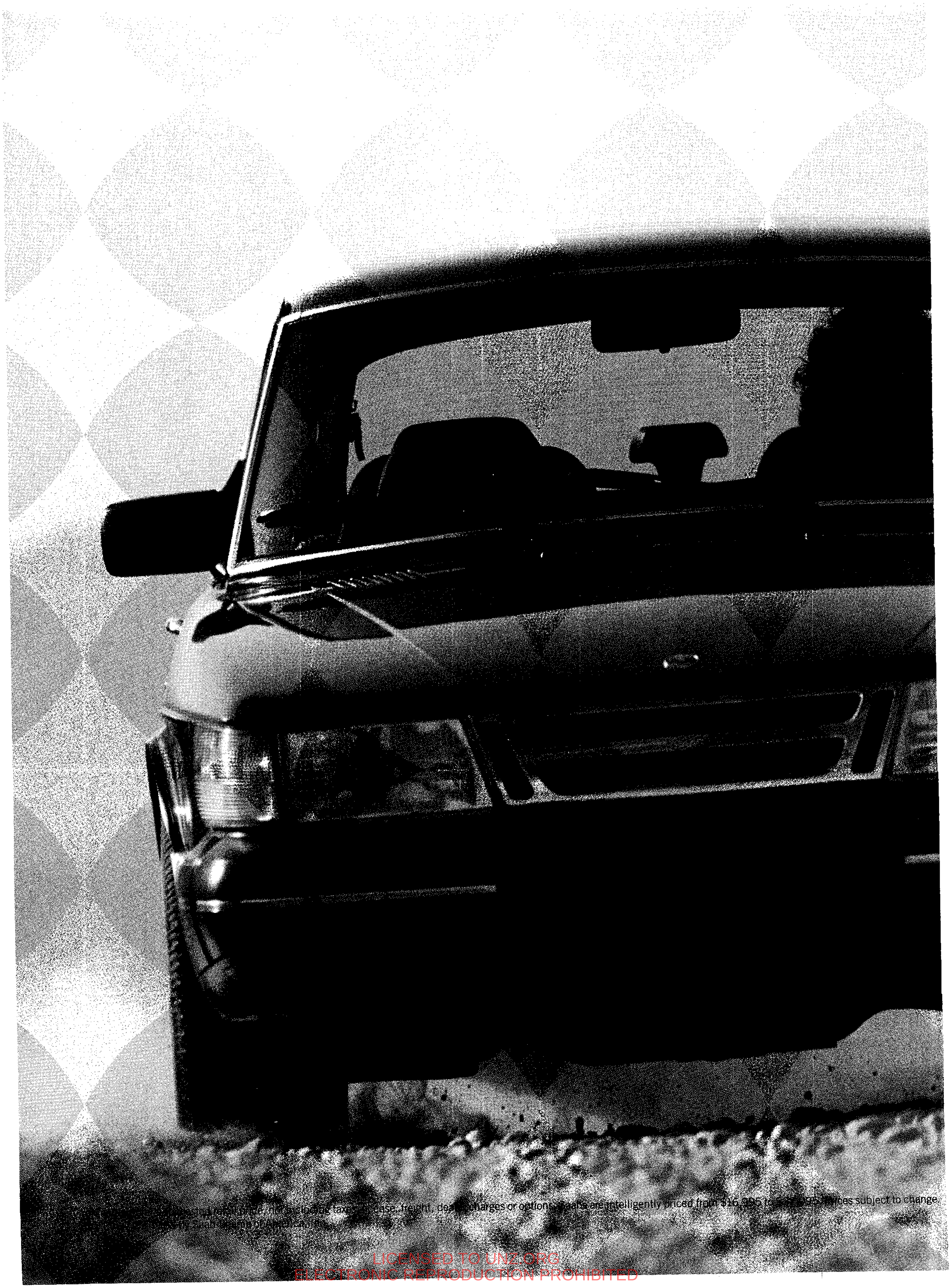

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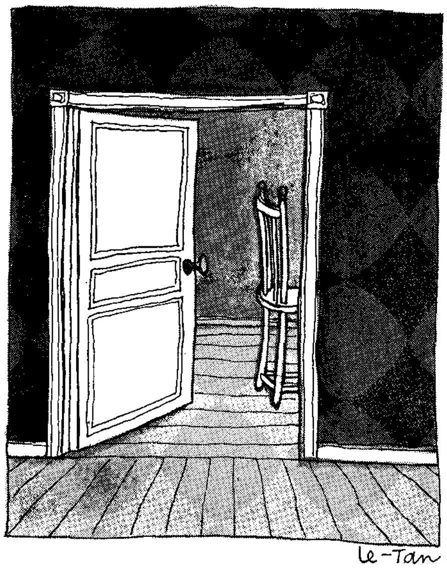
a brown bear and a grizzly on his hands. He gave them, with some relief, to the city, and thus began a zoo. In 1953, Austin Flegel, a Portlander who was working as an economic adviser in Thailand, was given a four-year-old female elephant as a gift, and sent her to Washington Park. She was housed in the zoo's dilapidated camel barn and—Portland being the city of roses—was immediately named Rosy. Rosy's advent caused the voters to approve a bond issue to build a new zoo—she led parades, attended store openings, and threw out the first ball at a Portland Beavers baseball game.

The zoo's director, Jack Marks, wanted to build the ultimate modern zoo, where the animals would live in natural settings and rarely require handling by their keepers. Together with the architects Abbott Lawrence and Ernest Tucker, Marks travelled the country in search of ideas, and Lawrence and Tucker eventually designed a large, open zoo with grottoes and moats in place of cages and bars. In September of 1956, before the new zoo was finished, another elephant arrived. A Portland engineer named Orville Hosmer had gone to Vietnam to help rebuild a village destroyed by a flood, and in gratitude the villagers gave him a female calf named Tuy Hoa (pronounced Tee Wah).

Rosy and Tuy Hoa moved into their spacious new quarters in November of 1959. The move from the camel barn had to be effected by truck, and neither of the animals was particularly willing to clamber aboard. They finally did so only with the guidance of a pair of more experienced elephants—Belle and a bull named Thonglaw, both of whom belonged to an animal importer named Morgan Berry, a friend of Jack Marks. Berry was destined to play an essential role in Portland's elephant future. He had imported four baby elephants (and a large number of other wild and exotic animals) some years before, and raised them in the basement of his house, in a residential neighborhood in Seattle. He later made a living with his own travelling elephant show and such odd jobs as helping to move Portland's elephants. By 1961, when Belle was nine and Thonglaw fourteen, Berry wanted a little break. He lent both, along with Pet, then six years old, to Washington Park for a few winter months, planning to retrieve them in the spring. Berry suspected that Belle was pregnant by Thonglaw, and he thought he knew the date of conception; he had, after all, stood right next to Belle while Thonglaw mounted her. But the conventional wisdom of the time held that both animals were too young to breed successfully, and Berry kept his suspicions to himself. No elephant had been born in the United States in the previous forty-four years; no elephant bred in captivity here had ever survived.

Elephant reproduction is rather simple and elegant, and resembles human reproduction in certain ways: elephants bear single babies, assist each other in labor, birth, and the rearing of the young, and live in family groups. The cows have two human-size breasts on the upper chest. Males reach sexual maturity at the age of nine or ten; females can conceive as young as six. A cow's most fertile years are from twenty-five to forty-five, after which she reaches menopause. The heavy, hidden matings of elephants have inspired fantastic and beautiful ideas; long treatises on the nature of love, lust, fidelity, and adultery among pachyderms; tales of poetry, yearning, and faith. Elephants were once said to have died from "a broken heart"; in fact, they do sometimes die suddenly, with no apparent cause, after separation from their loved ones. It is still widely believed that they mate only in privacy, or only under water, and in ancient times it was believed that male elephants fell in love with human women, particularly those who sold flowers or perfume. One such elephant courted a woman by laying apples in her bosom. J. H. Williams, in "Elephant Bill," his 1950 memoir of twenty years in Burmese elephant camps, wrote:

> The mating of wild elephants is very private. The bull remains, as usual, outside the herd, and his lady love comes out where she knows she will find him. . . . They fall in love, and days, and even weeks, of courtship may take place. . . . When they have knocked off from the day's work, they will call each other and go off together into the jungle.



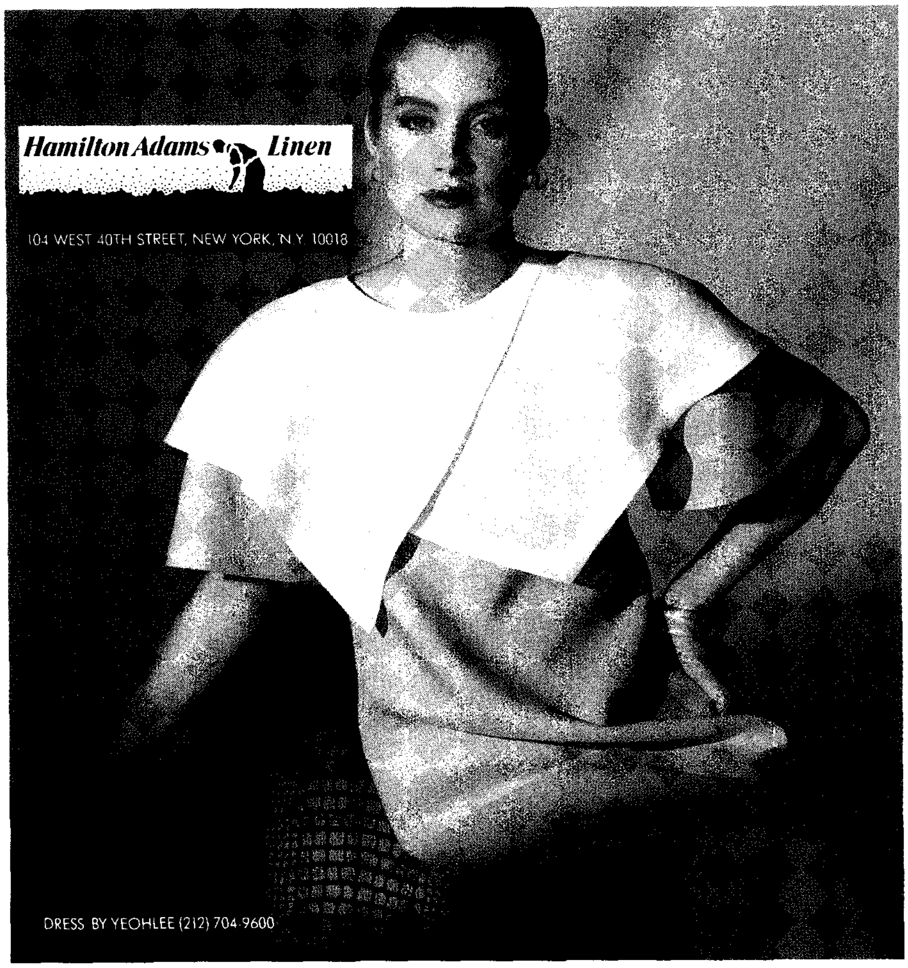
In a more comprehensive work, Richard Carrington's "Elephants," the author states that the ancients believed that elephants copulated face to face: "This was regarded as additional proof of the animal's wisdom and intelligence. . . . They will indulge in innocent dalliance, much as young human couples in spring. . . . Dalliance turns to serious love play, the female using all her wiles to bring the male to the peak of his desire. . . . Anyone who has studied the way a female elephant encourages her lover by alternate advances and retreats, by provocative gestures of her body, and a teasing and erotic use of the trunk, will recognize her prowess as the Cleopatra of the animal world."

Some elephant keepers wondered if elephants *could* breed successfully in captivity; Morgan Berry told anyone who would listen that they would breed only in natural conditions. Elephant science was an esoteric and undeveloped field in the early nineteen-sixties. No one was certain of the length of the gestation period, and almost nothing was known of the estrous cycle, because cows show no overt signs of fertility. Wild bulls were thought to mate throughout the year, since elephant calves are born in all seasons; what may appear to be a season—a preponderance of births in a few months' time, for instance—can be tied to drought and famine, rather than to seasonal ovulation.

The only real experience with elephant reproduction came from the work camps of Southeast Asia, but the animals in such camps have never been systematically bred. Traditionally, they are released from their chains at night to wander the nearby forests and eat; the mahouts round them up each morning, having tracked each one by the sound of the bell around its neck. (After Jim Sanford returned from a trip to Thailand, he told me that the elephants sometimes used their trunks to stuff mud in the bells, which muffled the sound. "I wondered why they didn't just tear the bell off," he said. "Well, they get chastised for that. But stuffing mud in it isn't against the rules.") The cows mate at night with wild bulls, and the resulting calves are genetically sound and born to work. The working bulls are conditioned not to mate, according to Dr. Michael Schmidt, the Washington Park veterinarian. "Riders are afraid that if the bulls have total freedom of action and express sexual behavior, they will inevitably turn on the riders and kill them—which the bulls often do anyway," he told me. "The riders will do whatever they can to control that. A young bull who has an erection is beaten. So young bulls get the idea that being interested in cows is too painful, and their libido decreases to the point where they are just not interested in mating if there are people around."

In this country, bulls with erections are sometimes punished, but for a different reason. The mature bull elephant's penis, which weighs more than forty pounds, is long and flexible; this enables it to reach the female's cervix, at the end of a twisting, back-angled tube and well hidden from the world. The penis has tendons that allow it to make "searching" motions, from side to side and up and down, in the vaginal canal. I've watched Packy roaming around the yard with his penis fully extended and bumping against his hind legs as he seems to swagger for the viewing public. Such an unabashed offering by the male is deemed too great an embarrassment in most zoos and circuses. But the principal disincentive to elephant births in the United States is environmental. Many zoos keep only one or two elephants, and these are almost always cows; there have never been many mature bulls in this country. An unsocialized cow and a skeptical bull will be brought together as strangers, by keepers with no understanding of fertility; little wonder that the attempt has seldom been successful.

Beginning in January of 1962, when Belle's breast development made her pregnancy undeniable, a vigil was kept at Washington Park; no one knew when she might deliver, or how difficult the labor might be. It was a long wait. At 5:58 A.M. on April 14th—a gestation, according to Morgan Berry's dates, of six hundred and thirty-five days—Belle delivered a male calf in good health, after an hour of active labor. Mother clamped the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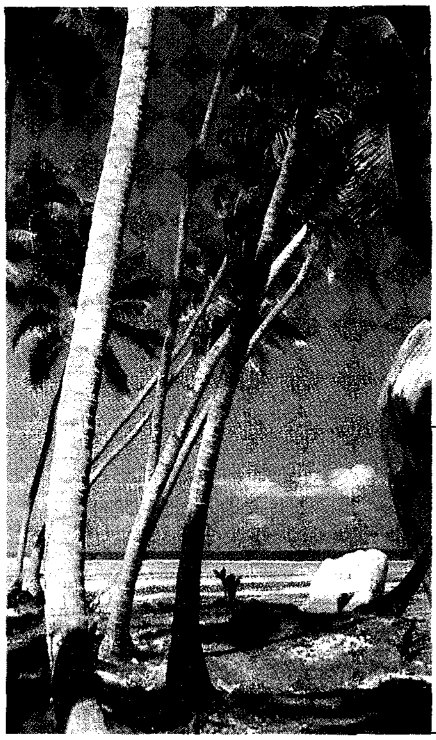

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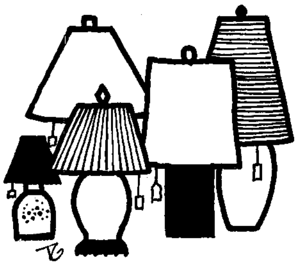
umbilical cord with her trunk, and Thonglaw promptly ate his congratulatory cigar. The event was front-page news across the country. Less than twenty-four hours after the birth, Berry received an offer for Belle and her baby—thirty thousand dollars, from the Brookfield Zoo, outside Chicago. The next day, Berry offered the two suddenly famous elephants to the city of Portland for twenty thousand dollars, payable within a month. A citizens' committee was formed, and money began to trickle in: schoolchildren donated nickels; unions made donations from pension funds; charity car washes, bowling tournaments, square dances were held. The thriving baby, already accustomed to long lines of sightseers willing to wait hours for a two-minute view, was named Packy in a radio-station contest. Before the deadline had passed, Berry closed the deal and threw in Thonglaw and Pet for nothing. Thonglaw, during his extended winter vacation, had mated several times, and almost immediately the keepers realized that Rosy was pregnant; a few weeks later, they discovered that both Tuy Hoa and Pet were pregnant as well. Thonglaw's dynasty had begun.



WHEN Michael Schmidt, fresh from the University of Minnesota, arrived at Washington Park in 1973 to serve as the veterinarian, there were eight elephants in residence: Rosy and her daughter, Me Tu; Tuy Hoa and her daughter, Hanako; Thonglaw; Belle; Packy; and Pet. Both Pet and Hanako were pregnant. Thonglaw had sired ten calves; eight had survived, and all but Hanako and Me Tu had been given or sold to zoos and circuses. Portland was elephant-happy. Packy had a birthday party every year, at which thousands of people cheered him on as he ate a forty-pound cake of whole wheat, carrots, and peanut butter. The zoo was developing an adoption program, encouraging businesses and groups to pay the cost of feeding a particular elephant for a year at a time.

"When I arrived, I had no special interest in elephants," Schmidt confessed to me one morning. We were in his office at the animal hospital, a flat-roofed, inconspicuous building set in a draw filled with ferns and willow trees, behind the beaver and otter exhibits. "But you have to, here. This place was unique—the only place in the Western Hemisphere actually breeding elephants, and it had been the only place for years. We're still the only zoo with second-generation births. This was *the* biggest thing that this small zoo in the West was doing, and it was outdoing the Bronx Zoo and the San Diego Zoo and all the others in a very difficult task. So it wasn't a matter of whether or not to get involved—you'd *better* get involved."

Schmidt began teaching himself elephant medicine. He quickly discovered that Washington Park's success was something of an accident; no one really knew why Portland's elephants bred and other zoos' elephants did not. Schmidt began the first methodical testing of the elephants, making daily observations. He wanted to understand their reproduction and ultimately—by still undiscovered techniques of artificial insemination—increase it. One of the few things that were known about elephant reproduction by that time was the estrous cycle. In 1971, three biologists who had studied plantation elephants in Sri Lanka published a paper concluding that the elephant ovulates every twenty-two days. A second paper described a behavior seen in the bulls—an elaborate gesture in which the trunk is placed in a spot of urine and curled into the mouth. The authors called it urine testing, and suspected that the bull was checking cow urine for signs of fertility. Schmidt began seeing the gesture, too. "No one was paying any attention to this behavior," he told me. "I looked at it and thought, Well, that's certainly a way to tell if the bull is interested in a particular cow."

Schmidt thought that the attractant had to be a pheromone of some kind, and he invented the sniff test, making use of the elephant barn's hydraulic doors, which can be opened an inch at a time. The sniff test is a rather impolite but simple method of allowing a bull contact with a cow without endangering either cow or keeper. In a sniff test, Schmidt and the keepers place a bull on one side of a door opened wide enough for a trunk, and back a cow up to the opening on the other side. The cow holds still—usually with a placid patience but sometimes with a keeper's encouragement—while the bull checks her urine and urogenital secretions with his trunk. Schmidt keeps track of the length of time the bull seems interested. "We didn't know if the cows would get upset by being backed up to a bull, or what the bull would do, and so forth," he told me. "It turned out that young Packy was quite interested in breeding and in the cows, and very happy to check them. And the cows, once they'd figured out what we were doing—well, it was fine with them, no big deal. I started to make daily observations, which we have done, with only a handful of missed days, since the fall of '74." Schmidt was surprised by what he found: peaks of intense interest in a particular cow for a few days, followed by months of indifference. "And these were known breeding cows," he explained. "They'd all been pregnant and given birth, so they had estrous cycles. Something was fishy about the published estrous cycle. It sure couldn't be twenty-two days."

Schmidt's wife, Anne, who is a research biologist at the zoo, had done serum-hormone assays on the zoo's African lions, and had mapped the lion ovulatory cycle by noting changes in the levels of hormones in the blood. She suggested that the same might be done with the elephants, and Mike began drawing blood from the cows. He used a vein in the leg or the ear, laboriously bleeding each cow himself once a week, until Roger Henneous couldn't stand it any longer. "Roger said, '*I* could do that.' I said, 'O.K., Roger, go ahead,' sure that he couldn't. But damned if he didn't get a vein the first time. After that, the keepers did it."

Over several months, Schmidt noticed patterns in the hormone levels, including a sixteen-week cycle of progesterone. The sniff-test results correlated with the progesterone cycle in a ratio "too good to be true," Schmidt told me. "The bull is interested in the cow at the nadir of progesterone—about a four-week period—and especially at the few days around ovulation. The cow ovulates, and the progesterone starts to climb. The estrous cycle turns out to be about sixteen weeks long—the longest of any mammal by far." The cow is willing to be bred for only a few days during her cycle: ovulation is a brief event, and the egg is viable for only about twelve hours. Schmidt tried mating three cows by cycle, placing each with a bull in a private room for several days of the magic period. All three became pregnant. "The pheromone was exactly, beautifully inverse to the progesterone," he said. "You never see anything that clear, ever. There were some jokes about it, actually, because it did look too good to be true. But we had enough data so that we didn't have to worry."

Schmidt is a careful man, never without a neat lab coat, and slow to offer a smile. But now he did. "At the time we were doing this work, the San Diego Zoo was using elephant urine to determine hormone levels," he continued. "One of its endocrinologists presented a paper on this work at a conference, in the course of which he said, 'Well, we all know that you can't get blood samples from elephants.' Now, that's true of okapis and hippos and rhinos, and I think it's great to develop urinary techniques for animals like that, because trying to get a weekly blood sample would be impossible. But elephants are domesticated animals as well as wild animals. The people in San Diego couldn't get blood samples from elephants, so they assumed that nobody could. But a veterinarian can do much more with elephants than with other animals. Elephants are intelligent; they have an arm and a hand, and being able to manipulate the environment accelerates the development of that intelligence. You can go into the cages with them. You can't do that with tigers, or polar bears, for example. You can't do that kind of work with a lot of species. You certainly can't get a bird to stand still and hold its wing up while you get a blood sample every week. You have to grab the bird, hold it down, it's struggling—whereas an elephant can be trained to stand there while you get a blood sample, and you give her an apple when you're done, and she thinks she's getting a bargain."

"Ed's a lawyer slash actor, Ron's a lawyer slash filmmaker, and Beverly's a lawyer slash playwright."

• •

It is also Mike Schmidt's job to act as matchmaker to the elephants. One of his concerns is genetics; the herd at Washington Park represents a limited gene pool. Of the twenty-four calves born there, nineteen have survived. Two of the dead were the offspring of Packy and Hanako, who are brother and half sister, and one was the offspring of Thonglaw and his daughter Hanako. (The two other deaths were apparently due to random congenital defects.) Such close genetic pairings are no longer made, although Packy and his half sister Me Tu have twice reproduced without any problems. Schmidt must consider not only the elephants' degree of relatedness but also the age and experience of both cow and bull, their relative size, whether the bull is in musth, and the personalities involved. Some cows have expressed strong opinions about certain bulls, and the bulls, while somewhat less discriminating, also have their preferences.

"When mating goes on, the cow has to coöperate," Schmidt said. "The bull has to be on good terms with that cow. We've seen enough cases where a bull doesn't like a specific cow, or cows won't stand for a certain bull, whereas they will stand nicely for another one. Elephants are capable of forming that kind of relationship. They tend to have the same sorts of problems that all complex, intelligent animals have—like the primates, and ourselves."

Schmidt allows the elephants whatever accommodations they need, which may mean a night alone in a yard for one pair and a private room for another. Tunga, having been brought up as a show animal, won't approach a cow in front of human beings. "Elephants—particularly the older animals—are not like cattle, where you have a female in heat and you bring in a bull and he jumps up and breeds her," Schmidt explained. "There's a chemistry between elephants. A really experienced bull doesn't like it when a cow doesn't act the way an experienced cow ought to—when her response is abnormal, to put it in scientific terms. The bull will often become immediately aggressive if the cow is behaving strangely. She may not *know* what to do. But a young bull doesn't care—a young, eager, excited bull will try to breed any cow he can. The difficulty the younger bulls have is that older cows can dominate them, because they're bigger or wiser. If the cow doesn't want to coöperate, a young bull doesn't have the equipment and the technique and the size to assert himself, whereas an older bull will sort the situation out in a hurry."

By November of 1974, Thonglaw had sired fifteen calves, of whom twelve survived. He would not submit to chains in order to undergo footcare, and had consequently suffered from foot problems for years. Schmidt resolved to do something about this, and after consulting Morgan Berry he decided to tranquillize the elephant—always a risky procedure. To everyone's dismay, Thonglaw died under sedation. (The crush was developed and built as a kind of memorial to Thonglaw, to spare future elephants the same risk.) Packy, then twelve, became the patriarch. He has since fathered seven calves.

"Packy makes it clear what he wants," Schmidt told me. "We'd be afraid to put Tamba in with Packy, because he seems to dislike her, and he's so much bigger than she is. She would tend to fight him a bit—to think that she shouldn't have to do what he wants. Tamba's sort of imprinted on people." Neither will Packy mate with Belle, his mother. "I think he knows she's his mother," Schmidt said, "but I can't prove it."

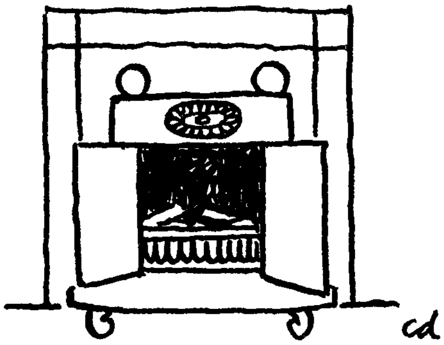
I have never seen a pair of elephants mate—few people have—and I suspect that if I had the opportunity I would turn my back. I was shown a series of photographs of such an occasion, and I felt like a voyeur, a trespasser into private territory. In the photographs, the bull begins by laying his trunk across the cow, guiding her gently against a wall, stroking her until she assumes a spread-leg stance. It is too intimate, this soft control, the stolid acceptance by the female, and then the unexpectedly human posture. He plants himself behind her, upright and stately. It took me a moment to place that dignity: it is Ganesha, the elephant-headed Hindu god of wisdom. The bull stands erect and bows his head to his work with all the concentration of a man and all the power of a god.

TUESDAYS are blood-sampling days here. Early on a summer morning, before the zoo's gates opened and the crowds arrived, I watched while Jim Sanford and Jay Haight performed their deft art. They visited Hanako and Tamba first, in a room at the far end of the hall. The giant animals seemed genuinely glad to see them, and immediately moved close to greet them. Haight carried an ankus, a tool that looks something like a boathook and is used to guide and control the elephant, and laid it lightly alongside Hanako's trunk, taking hold of her fleshy, triangular lower lip with his free hand. "She likes me to hold her," he told me. "It keeps her calm. She's not wrapped too tight."

Hanako stood still and patient for a moment, then began stroking Haight with her trunk, waved it in my direction—I was standing safely outside the hydraulic door, which was opened a foot or two—and finally swung it to her side, stroking Sanford's trousers. Sanford pulled out the fan of her thin-skinned ear, rippled with veins, and poked a small needle into the largest, a gentle line running like a riverbed from top to bottom. The needle lodged in place, and he held a vial to catch the steady drops. Hanako's trunk continued its undulations, from Haight to the unfamiliar air around me and on to Sanford. When the vial was full, Sanford pulled out the needle, stepped through the door, and took two bananas from a box.

"Tamba, get back, get back!" he shouted at the younger cow, who had rushed forward in her eagerness for fruit. He moved to Hanako. "Trunk!" She swung the floppy member aside, and Sanford shoved the bananas in whole.

Tamba was restless. "She knows she's gonna get a stick and a treat," Sanford explained. "She's a happy camper. She's a doll." Tamba moved over to the door opening. She threw her trunk above her head like a lady flinging open a parasol; her mouth opened wide, presenting me with a giant pink cavity framed by two bright, intelligent eyes. Her tushes, short and dull, were at the front of a set of enormous molars, each nine inches long and weighing about four pounds. Her throat dropped away from me into blackness, the pale-pink tongue, as large as a loaf of bread, damp and vibrating with life. Sanford reached in and massaged her tongue, grabbing it with a firm hand and scratching its rough surface. Tamba seemed to sigh with pleasure at the touch. The men traded places, Haight moving to Tamba's ear while Sanford held her trunk. As they worked, they swore cheerfully, insulting each other and the animals, disparaging clothes, looks, and heredity with equal zest. Tamba wiggled her head, trying to watch, and Sanford, tall enough to meet her at eye level, yelled in her ear, "Get your head down, or I'll get all over you like a cheap suit!"



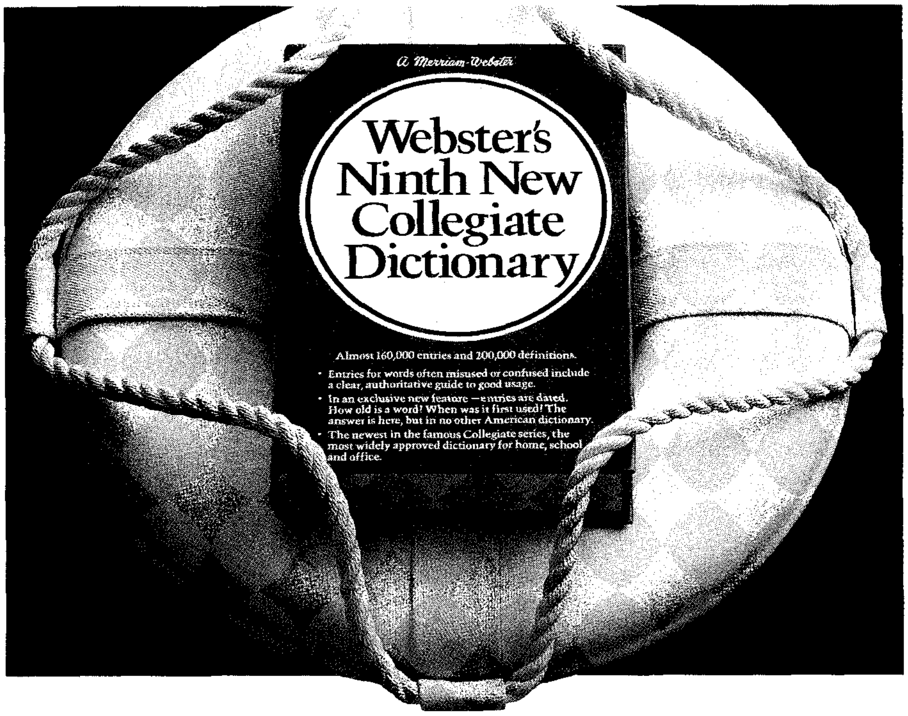
Roger Henneous ducked in the door, carrying an electronic thermometer. Steadily, half bored, he took Tamba's skin temperature while Haight drew blood. Behind Henneous, Hanako bobbed gracefully. She rubbed her head against his back, the bulbous gray skull easily dwarfing the man in his brown uniform. Henneous ignored her, but I couldn't: I ventured too close to the door, and she was distracted by me, by my new smell, and came to press her trunk against me. It was a wet, bristly, live thing, like the head of an anxious reptile, and she inhaled me in a rush of wind. By the time Haight stepped between us, scolding me for my reckless move, she had kissed tight to my shoe and was marching purposefully up my leg.

More cows were waiting in the viewing room, and the keepers rushed to finish before the zoo gates opened. This is the first place that people come to see the elephants. Several feet inside the glass panel are widely spaced bars as thick as a man's arm; because Chang Dee was small enough to slip through the bars, four chains were strung between them. Sunshine held perfectly still while the keepers bled her ear. "She loves being treated like a grown-up," Sanford said, and rewarded her with two bunches of blackened bananas. Chang Dee reached for the fruit with his undersized trunk, and Sunshine marched away, bananas held high.

Elephants have many voices: they trumpet, rumble, squeak, growl, roar, snort. While Haight was patting Rosy under the "forearm," a high metallic whine began. "I gotta get some grease—she needs oiling," he said, laughingly, and only then did I realize that the whine was elephant speech. Rosy, Pet, Me Tu, and Sunshine began to cry together, a shrill, stridulous, and very loud clamor rolling through the high-ceilinged room. It was an almost painful yet beautiful noise, split by belly rumbles, birdlike eeks and squawks, and the ululating song of whales. The men paid no attention and drew blood from Rosy's wrinkled ear, their voices raised above the din. Sanford scratched his back with the ankus and watched Chang Dee try, for the hundredth time, to climb over the chains strung between the bars. As suddenly as it had started, the squealing stopped. In the silence, Sanford began singing a Chuck Berry song to Sunshine, and the elephants joined in. There were wet exhalations, belches, growls and grunts, a repeating sonar blip, a keening whistle. The men passed out rewards, and Sanford gave Pet three bunches of bananas. Why three, I asked him, when the other cows got two?

"Because she's Pet," he answered with a grin. "They don't get any better than that."

IN all work with Asian elephants, there is one limit—the puzzling circumstance of musth. Cow elephants, and bulls out of musth, can be dangerous; the casual motions of the keepers in stroking an unchained cow mask a constant caution. But musth bulls are deadly. Knowing this, one sees in a new light historical references to the use of elephants. In the Rome of Pliny's time, people would sit down to a banquet, and then a ceremonially dressed elephant, picking its way through the crowd, would come and take its place at the table. I'm sure it was an uncommon spectacle—the gargantuan guest swaying past the seated diners. But what a risk! I thought of the Romans when I found a photo of Morgan Berry and Thonglaw the other day. Berry stood in front of the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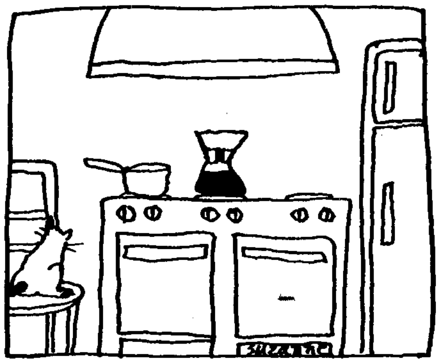
bull, who was seated on the ground, his front feet dangling high and Berry's son, Kenneth, clinging to his back. All three seemed in a kind of repose, still for the camera, waiting to do the next trick.

Musth occurs in Asian males beginning around the age of ten, and recurs once or twice a year. (Whether or not musth occurs in African elephants is a subject of considerable debate.) It is both a physical and a behavioral phenomenon. The first sign is usually drainage from the temporal glands (once called "musth vents"), which are on either side of the skull. The glands swell and then drain continuously; the distinctive dark streaks along the sides of the face are cues for caution. The ancients believed that elephants had pearls in their skulls, because the fluid can have a crystalline appearance, like salty tears. It was variously thought to be an antidote for poison, an aphrodisiac, an antiseptic, a tonic to grow hair.

A musth bull also dribbles urine constantly, and ceases to bathe himself, leaving his legs streaked and dirty. His blood levels of testosterone become abnormally high—high enough, Mike Schmidt believes, to interfere with healthy sperm production. The most immediate symptom of musth, though, and one that keepers are often able to spot before the temporal glands begin to drain, is a change in behavior. The bull will first exhibit restlessness, then aggression; finally, in musth's full power, there is a drowsy, abstracted melancholy, full of motion. "As the intensity of musth increases, the elephant becomes more peevish and aggressive of temper," reports the Indian naturalist Ramesh Bedi in his book "Elephant: Lord of the Jungle," and continues, "He resents everyone. Even those who were nearest him and on whom he depended annoy him." The elephant is "seized with frenzy and becomes ferocious," wrote Strabo. The Encyclopaedia of Islam describes the elephant character this way: "Normally of a playful disposition, and in fact addicted to jokes, it is terribly vindictive and has the ability to choose the best moment to wreak its vengeance." The mahouts of Burma and Thailand tie their musth bulls near water and let them eat the ground bare; malnutrition eventually keeps the animals from sustaining musth. The mahouts of old had other remedies, such as feeding a bull in musth a pound of tobacco a day, or a coconut with opium hidden inside. Musth bulls are ur-elephants, restless with the need to orbit, pacing, swaying, swinging, searching, peering, ramming their heads against pillars and walls, their great sides heaving, tails swishing, trunks blowing—not in confusion but with a glittering concentration. They are psychotic.

In the wild, musth bulls range and fight; never still, they track their territory. In circus and zoo, they must be isolated. Musth has condemned bull elephants—and, to a very large extent, elephant breeding—in this country. Dozens of young, healthy males have been executed, by gunshot, poison, and even hanging, and a few bulls are still executed each year for threatening or killing a keeper. Some of the dozens of bulls (and a few cows) that have been put to death in this country never hurt anyone; they simply frightened people too many times. They were guilty of making the obvious too glaring. Even at Washington Park, with the hydraulics, the crush, and the keepers' experience, musth means danger. A cow named Susie had the end of her tail bitten off by Tunga in musth. A few years ago, when both Hugo and Packy were in musth, Hugo stuck the end of his trunk into Packy's room. Packy—who is ordinarily, according to Roger Henneous, "an easily intimidated wimp"—immediately bit it off. For the next month, Hugo lived in the crush and was dosed with antibiotics, watered with a hose down his mouth, and fed. ("A bale of hay every day, by the handful," Jay Haight recalls. "There's a lot of handfuls in a bale of hay.") Hugo, lightly dubbed Master of Disaster, once made a nearly successful murderous assault on Haight, who was standing in an empty room next to Hugo's when the bull rammed the steel door between them with all his strength and barrelled through it. "I jumped in time, or I would have had two broken legs from the door," Haight told me. "I looked up and saw Hugo standing there with a ton of door on his head, still trying to harvest me." Yelling for help, Haight grabbed a pellet gun and fired it at Hugo's feet. ("Then he *really* got mad.") The stinging pellets made the bull retreat, and other keepers were able to distract him while Haight escaped. But no grudges are held against the demented. Recently, I watched Haight give Hugo a massage in the crush, grabbing fistfuls of the dusty gray skin, an inch thick in places, and crooning fond obscenities. Hugo's healed trunk, wormlike and deformed but still useful, scooped up carrots by the pound.



It is a zoo irony that musth lasts longer in a well-fed bull. "Our elephants are in superb physical condition," Mike Schmidt says. Their condition is so good, in fact, that Tunga once held musth for eight months. For all the potential danger, the keepers are clear on one point: if a human being is hurt by an elephant, it's the human being's fault. The bulls "can't help themselves," the keepers tell me; musth is a force beyond the bulls' reckoning.

After Morgan Berry turned Thonglaw, Belle, Pet, and Packy over to Washington Park, he moved to an eighty-acre farm near Woodland, Washington. In his sixties, living alone, he took with him ten elephants, seven of them bulls, and allowed them the freedom to roam much of the property. Berry's friend and fellow animal trainer Eloise Berchtold used Teak, one of Berry's bulls, in her travelling act. In 1978, she was in Toronto, due to perform, and all three of the bulls with her were showing signs of musth. Rather than cancel, she decided to work with Teak, who was normally a relaxed animal. Teak performed in front of several thousand people, and then, while he spun in a pirouette, Berchtold tripped and fell in front of him. Teak immediately turned and gored her with his tusks, pinning her to the ground. He stood guard over her body, refusing to move, and was finally shot by Canadian Mounties who had been called to the scene. Berry was grief-stricken. Berchtold had been his closest friend, and Teak a favorite. Thirteen months later, it was his turn.

No one witnessed his death. A neighbor, worried when Berry didn't phone—as he did regularly—visited the farm with Kenneth Berry, and in a meadow by the barn they found the battered, flattened body under a bull named Buddha. Buddha was a big animal, very good at tricks. He could stand on his head and a single foreleg. But he had a reputation for unpredictability and bad temper. That day, his temporal glands were draining. Perhaps (as some of Berry's friends believe) Berry had had a heart attack and the bull had tried to revive him; such things have happened. Kenneth Berry, who at the time was a primate keeper with the zoo in Seattle, was left with nearly a hundred thousand pounds' worth of elephants to babysit, feed, and find homes for. Finally, with real regret, he destroyed Buddha, after months of trying to place him somewhere and failing. Washington Park—the only facility likely to be able to handle Buddha—refused. Tunga, a far more even-tempered bull, was the zoo's legacy from Morgan Berry.

"Everyone wants to believe that he has the special secret to working with a musth bull," says Schmidt. "But you can be with elephants until the day they decide to go after you and kill you, and that's it. And when you go to Asia and look at the working elephants the mahouts will say, 'This one's killed four men, this one's killed two, this cow's killed three.' And you say, 'My God, what do you do?' Well, they put another guy on, and back to work they go. We used to think that the mahouts knew how to work with these animals and that if we could only learn their secrets everything would be all right. But it's a calculated risk. Our philosophy here is that you treat bulls pretty much the way you treat cows, except that you can go in with the cows and handle them, and you can't do that with the bulls. But the bulls here are at least able to go anywhere in the facility, at any time. No other zoo in the world is run this way."

THOUGH musth has been recognized as long as human beings have been near Asian elephants, its biological purpose remains unknown. Some biologists have speculated that it constitutes a rut, or mating season, like the aggressive sexual period of the deer. This notion has recently been given play by Cynthia Moss and her associate Joyce Poole, who study African elephants on a small preserve in

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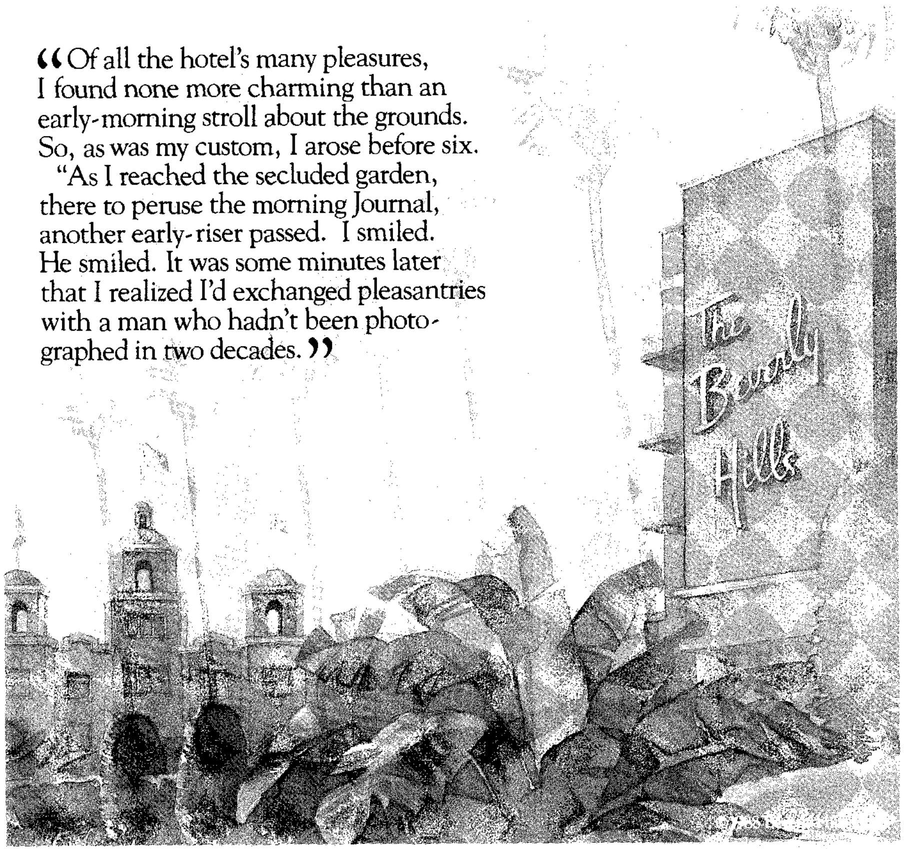
"As I reached the secluded garden, there to peruse the morning Journal, another early-riser passed. I smiled. He smiled. It was some minutes later that I realized I'd exchanged pleasantries with a man who hadn't been photographed in two decades."



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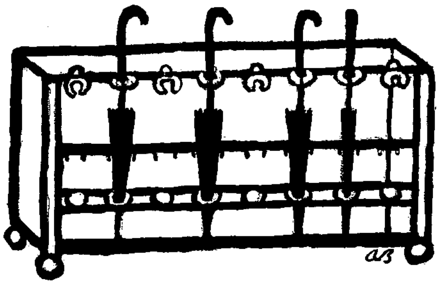
Kenya. In Moss's book "Elephant Memories," published in 1988, and in articles by Moss and Poole, the claim is made not only that musth is a rut but that a true musth occurs in African elephants, who also exhibit temporal-gland secretion. Moss further states in her book that fertile females exhibit overt estrous behavior, including a particular gait. She also believes that musth bulls employ characteristic patterns of ear-waving and trunk gestures, and that they emit special sounds. She writes:

> Both my data and Joyce's on mating behavior indicate that females prefer mating with musth bulls and that they may actually exercise some choice in the matter.... I think it is worth considering that a female might come into estrus in response to a particular male being in musth, and in that case she may be exercising choice.

Mike Schmidt is impatient with these claims. "This is a problem in working with exotic animals in the field, and even in zoos," he told me. "For some reason, people think they can get away with a lesser test of the validity of what they're doing. If you have a theory stating that musth is rut, then you should have data that are in agreement with the theory—you should be able to demonstrate that all the bulls you are studying come into musth at the same time, because that's what a rut is. It's a seasonal thing. All the females will come into heat at that time, too." Seated behind his desk, thinning hair neatly combed, his lab coat freshly pressed, Schmidt seemed the picture of reason. On a cupboard door behind him hung a calendar tracking the estrous cycles of the cows ("Pet OV, Hanako OV")—a random overlay of sixteen-week periods. "We *know* that isn't true of Asians," he went on. "The females have independent cycles. They give birth all through the year—that's been observed in both species, in the wild. So musth is not a rut. It's primarily a phenomenon of aggression. When bulls are in the depths of musth, they're absolutely incapable of breeding. We see a decline in the quality of the sperm late in musth. Now, that is certainly contrary to rut. They physically cannot bring normal mating to successful completion. They're dopey, they're somnolent. They may develop an erection, but they're unable to control it."

The temporal-gland secretion itself is fairly complex, with twenty major components in a changing ratio. "The gland is a chemical-communication gland, and it may also function as a means of excreting testosterone," says Dr. Lois Rasmussen, a biochemist with a Ph.D. in neurochemistry who is working with the Washington Park elephants. "It may be multifunctional." Dr. Rasmussen is Lois on academic papers, and Betsey or Bets face to face. For the past eight years, she has been searching for the elephant sex pheromone, that odd thing that tells Packy or Tunga when Pet or Hanako is ovulating, the occult substance that Mike Schmidt measures in his sniff tests. Bets Rasmussen looks less like a biochemist than a high-school physical-education coach. Thin and wiry, with close-cropped sun-bleached hair, she is also an avid scuba diver and wildlife photographer, and her skin is tanned a nut brown from long spells under the equatorial sun. In addition to her pheromone work, she is deeply interested in musth, and has collected references to it from all periods of recorded history. Even a prehistoric cave drawing of a mammoth shows the dark streaks of temporal-gland secretion.

"It's important to note that there are two species of elephants, in separate genera," she told me one hot afternoon last August. We were sitting, shoulder to shoulder, in her tiny office at the Oregon Graduate Center, a private research institute outside Portland; the walls were covered with posters and photographs of elephants—elephants mating, elephants walking, fetal elephants, elephants in various stages of dissection. "In one of these species—the Asian—musth has been recognized for hundreds and hundreds of years. In the other species, there has been some recent evidence of a musthlike phenomenon. But you can't conclude that the two are the same, because the evidence is only starting to be gathered. You don't just take a term out of the dictionary and plug it in somewhere else." The first false assumption is that musth is a rut, she says, and the second is the application of that term to another species.



"Now, my experience is with Asians," she continued. "If these two states are the same thing, we should see the same behavior in both species, and we don't. If I take urine at certain times in the musth cycle, and make an extract, I get several reactions from the cows. There's an intense reaction at first—the cow checks the spot out. After that, there's an avoidance. Such data are not consistent with a cow's being attracted to a male, or signalling that she's getting ready to go into estrus. I remember watching Hugo in the viewing room when he was in very heavy musth. He was dribbling urine. We let him out and let the cows in, one by one. The first one in was Pet. Normally, she strolls around while she's waiting for the others to come in. This time, she stopped dead, and she seemed— Well, it's anthropomorphizing, but she looked nervous, timid. She went around the room practically on tiptoe. O.K., in the early days of the attempts at breeding the elephants she was bred several times to Hugo when he was well into musth, and he tends *not* to breed then but to beat up the cows. He almost killed her one day. So she remembers the smell of that musth urine—which does smell horrible. Males avoid each other in musth. Cows avoid musth bulls, too. If cows are afraid of a musth bull, then how is musth a rut? It doesn't make sense. Musth is *not* a rut."

THE study of pheromones is a new one, as scientific studies go. The name wasn't invented until 1959, and then only after considerable argument. The roots of the word are Greek for "carry" and "excite"—a good term for the myriad roles of these substances. Pheromones are chemicals used for communication among individuals of a single species. They are secreted as liquids and usually received as volatiles, and they constitute a conversation of sorts. Slime molds, algae, and fungi all use pheromones. Social insects, such as ants and bees, may use a dozen or more pheromones in a typical day—one to raise an alarm, another to mark a trail or a particular plant, another to signal social status or group membership. Barnacles collect on rocks and boats by following pheromone signals. When a honeybee stings, it releases a

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chemical that alarms nearby honeybees.

Pheromones are also used in combination. Research on the Oriental fruit moth shows that not just one chemical but five must be present in a critical ratio in order to attract a male. There are releaser pheromones, which (like the honeybee sting) cause rapid behavioral responses, and primer pheromones, which affect physiology and trigger developmental changes; the most famous example of these is the pheromone that enables a queen bee to suppress ovarian development in worker bees. One of the most dramatic characteristics of pheromones is what the sociobiologist E. O. Wilson calls their "efficiency": they are among the most potent biologically active chemicals known, able to transmit complex information in tiny amounts over long distances for long periods. The Texas leaf-cutting ant, for instance, can point the way to food by leaving a trail some hundred yards long which can be found and followed for months. The extreme dilution of the chemicals makes their identification exceedingly tedious for the researcher. The silkworm moth responds to only a few molecules of a certain chemical; hundreds of thousands of moths are needed to produce ten milligrams. Two hundred thousand fire ants must be sacrificed to collect a quarter of a milligram of a pheromone. Furthermore, many of the pheromones isolated so far have been new compounds.

Mammalian pheromones have proved much more difficult to identify than insect pheromones. Among mammals, pheromones have been clearly identified only in male pigs, in female marmosets and springboks, and in both male and female guinea pigs, hamsters, and mice—though it is thought that all mammals (with the possible exception of human beings) use them. In every species, it is the sex pheromones—with all they imply about behavior and free will, and the potential for use in husbandry—that are of the most interest. The typical exchange involves chemicals used by the female to attract the male; occasionally, the male will draw the female. Another insect example is that of an arrestant chemical found in certain mites and mosquitoes: it calls the male to an immature female and forces him to attend her until she is ready to mate. Pheromones exert a disturbing amount of control, fostering attraction, repulsion, a willingness to wait, to consort, to surrender. I was delighted when I first read of the male pig's pheromone: his salivary glands secrete a steroid related to testosterone, and when he spits in a sow's face she immediately takes up a spread-leg posture, ripe for the taking. (This same steroid, it happens, is found in truffles.) But, being a mammal myself, the longer I considered the possibilities the more uncomfortable I became.

Much of what I know of pheromones I have learned from Bets Rasmussen. If she succeeds in isolating an elephant sex pheromone, it could be a turning point in the fight to restore and preserve the species. She talks of the possibility of chemical "fences" in the wild to attract elephants to preserves and hold them there, and of a stimulant to encourage breeding in zoos and facilitate sperm collection for artificial insemination. There is, too, she admits, the joy of solitary research: the voyage into the unknown and the delight of discovery. "Mammalian pheromones are just now being isolated," she explained. "Substances that were identified as pheromones in some of the early work have turned out to be impurities. Mammals are more complicated organisms than insects, and they have pheromones doing a variety of things. Even if you're thinking just sex pheromones, you have to separate the mating process into its components: attraction, pre-copulatory behavior, actual copulation. There may be more than one pheromone acting at each stage."

In 1976, Bets Rasmussen was raising two children while she did independent research on the interaction, in sharks and other primitive fish, of the brain and the cerebrospinal fluid. She lived in Pullman, Washington, where her husband, an atmospheric scientist, was teaching at Washington State University. In the lab one day, she met a biologist named Irven Buss, who was looking for an assistant.

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"He said, 'You know, I've got this really interesting problem I'm working on. I've done a lot of work on elephant behavior and elephant reproduction. But I've always been interested in chemical communication.' This was a new term to me. So he started to tell me his ideas about temporal-gland secretion." She and Buss collaborated on the first analysis of the secretion. In 1979, the Rasmussens moved to Portland, where Bets' husband had an offer to work and teach at the Oregon Graduate Center. Bets received a faculty appointment without salary, giving her access to laboratories but no teaching duties. She was still principally occupied with fish, but as a last favor to Buss she visited the Washington Park Zoo, and the elephants.

"The elephant keepers started to talk to me," she recalled, "and I said, 'You know, I'm really interested in this musth thing.' I got to like the elephant people, got to know them, and one day I met Dr. Schmidt." One of the first things Schmidt told her concerned the sniff tests and his suspicion that a pheromone was present in the urine. "I thought it was the most *fascinating* thing I'd ever heard in my whole life. Here was a problem that made everything I was doing with fish look like routine clinical chemistry."

She went to the chairman of the Chemistry Department at the Center, an organic chemist named G. Doyle Daves, and repeated what Schmidt had told her. Together, they began studying the urine of elephant cows in estrus, Daves doing the laboratory work of extracting compounds from the urine and Rasmussen the biological checks, recording the urine-testing reaction of the bulls to the laboratory samples. Their timing was based on Schmidt's blood data, and the keepers took responsibility for collecting the urine.

Urine collection changed the routine at the zoo in a permanent way. Whenever the designated cow of the day began to urinate, one of the keepers had to grab a bucket and race to catch the splattering stream. (There was no telling when this might occur. "Elephants can cross their legs till their eyeballs float," Roger Henneous says.) The keepers were lucky to collect twenty litres from a cow in her fertile period; Bets, admitting to a chronic fear of

LEARN-TO-DANCE PANTS
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running out of elephant urine, still keeps gallons of it in her freezers at the Center.

A few months into the work of chemical extraction, Daves left the Center for Lehigh University, and Bets was alone, without funding. "I was absolutely devastated," she told me. "I was not trained as an organic chemist. I was a biochemist, which is very different. I had no choice—if I didn't do the lab work myself I'd have to drop the project." She began borrowing equipment and teaching herself to use it; she has since learned to repair it as well.

One of the central questions in pheromone research is that of transportation: how does the chemical signal move from, say, the female to the male, and how does the male perceive it? Most of the identified insect pheromones are dissipated on the wind in gaseous form. But mammals appear to have a more elaborate, intimate method. It is common, even daily, practice among mammal species for a male to check a female's secretion by sniffing and licking her urine, her genital mucus, and her saliva. Often a female will assist in the process by standing still, moving her tail, or even politely urinating a small amount nearby. The male accomplishes his testing in a very specific way, by behavior known as flehmen. Classic flehmen is a grimace—an expression of bared teeth, curled upper lip, and open mouth. Both sexes of moose, giraffes, cattle, sheep, and goats, seeking information not only about fertility but also about status and identity, demonstrate classic flehmen. The curious expression, with its appearance of casual disdain, is thought to bring, by tongue and nostril movements, a bit of pheromone into the vomeronasal organ, a chemosensor present in almost every mammalian species and also in reptiles. (It is vestigial in human beings, with anatomical remnants visible in skull sections.) The vomeronasal organ is distinct from the olfactory system and is separately connected to the brain; in snakes, in fact, it is more highly developed than the sense of smell. (Eric Albone, a chemist at Bristol University, in England, thinks that tongue-flicking in snakes may be a kind of flehmen.) When a male flehmens a fertile female, he "tastes" her fertility with his vomeronasal organ. The taste stimulates him into mating; once the female has become pregnant, or has ceased to be fertile, she tastes different, and he will leave her alone.

It had been known for a long time that elephants had a vomeronasal organ, but little attention and less research had been devoted to it. When an elephant opens its mouth, pressing the trunk above the head and revealing its tunnel-like throat, two duct openings are visible in the roof of the mouth. Bets Rasmussen was able to get a good photograph of these pits when she noticed Packy out in the yard, trying to pull down the rain gutter of the barn. She waited until he stretched his trunk to its limit, and then she snapped the picture; it was the first ever published of the duct openings.

The elephant's trunk, which is about eight feet long in a mature bull, has an astonishing number of uses. With its trunk, an elephant eats (hay, cigarette butts, a single ice cube, a half-dozen large carrots at once); sucks up water, as much as four litres at a time, and squirts it down its throat; digs, pulls up plants, or pulls down tree branches; fights; smells (an elephant can detect odors several miles away); bathes and dusts itself; caresses its kin. Elephants put their trunks in each other's mouths, and sometimes an elephant drapes its trunk over a tusk, as artlessly as a man drapes a suit coat over his arm. The elephant rubs its own eyes, scratches behind its ears, and snorkels while swimming. (They are strong swimmers.) Elephants also flehmen; this is what is happening when a bull checks a cow in a sniff test. But a clear understanding of the nature of the behavior was a long time in coming.

"Everyone knew that the males stuck their trunk tips in the female urine, but they didn't connect that behavior with the vomeronasal organ," Bets told me early one morning as we stood behind the fence overlooking the back elephant yard. This is her spot—a corner of dirt and scrub not far from a head-high pile of elephant manure, which was steaming in the spring fog. Here she has bioassayed over ten thousand samples of urine extractions, in every kind of weather, standing for

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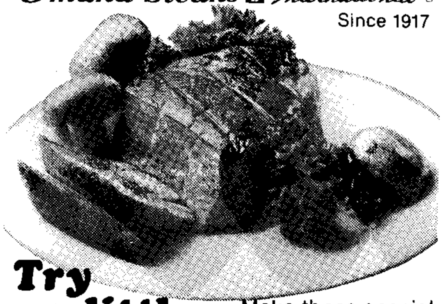

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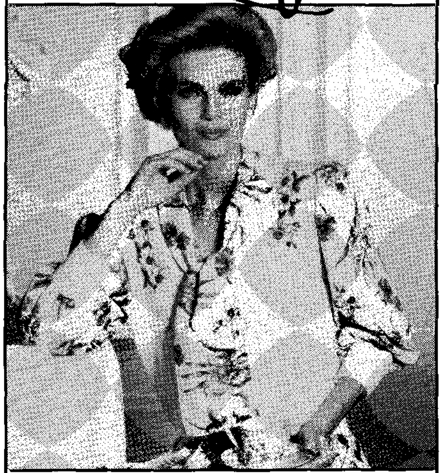

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hours at a time as a lone bull paces the sand. We were watching Tunga, who is normally a slow, rather dull animal. But today he was in the early stages of musth and restless; as soon as he spied us, he trotted over to the moat and stood opposite us, swaying from side to side, foot to foot. "That's one mad bull," Bets said, laughing. Tunga seemed to roll his head in indignation, and suddenly we were sprayed with wet sand, stinging and sharp.

Before Tunga was released into the yard, Bets had splashed six different samples along the newly washed concrete apron. One was a control—fresh urine from a cow who was not in estrus. The rest were new extractions. In the lab one day, she had shown me fifteen small flasks of liquid from the extraction process, each a different tint and with a different odor. She pulled the cork for No. 1, and I smelled a startlingly strong urine with a lingering, bitter reek. No. 15, the last in the line, was a very light coral color, with an aroma of cinnamon. Nos. 4, 5, and 6 were straw-colored and had the most surprising smell of all: elephants and hay. She laughed at my expression. "When I first smelled those I was *sure* I'd found the pheromone," she said.

If a bull fails to respond to a particular sample, Bets doesn't know whether that means that the pheromone is not present or just that it is present in too small a quantity. On the other hand, if a bull responds with unusual vigor she has to steel herself against untoward optimism. "As you separate these compounds, you create novel substances," she told me. "The animal will often respond to them the first and second, and even the third, time you bioassay, simply because they *are* novel." Six years ago, she found a volatile long-chain hydrocarbon. It *felt*, she says, like a pheromone. It was a common chemical, available in quantity, and she bought a batch of it. "We got tremendous response. We had five or six flehmens in a row from the bull. We thought we had found the pheromone! We were all elated. The next day, there was a response, but it was less marked. The third day, there was virtually nothing. The fourth, no response. That's a pitfall in the work of others—they've only done their experiments a couple of times and then assumed they've found an active compound. So it was a valuable lesson."

Tunga paced the concrete apron, sniffing the air. Suddenly, his trunk straightened like an arrow; the single fingertip at the trunk's end flared, and he placed his nostrils flat against the wet surface. His jaw dropped open, and he held perfectly still for a moment, a sculpture of discovery and concentration. Then he deftly curled his trunk in upon itself, in a long and pretty oval, and pressed the tip against the two dark pits inside.

"Oh, that's a good one," Bets said. "I was a little worried about that sample." The extracts that pass the test are further purified in the lab and then sent to Dr. Terry Lee, a longtime colleague of Bets, who gauges their molecular weight using a mass spectrometer. Bets made a check on her clipboard, looking down only for an instant, and returned to watching Tunga. "I get so excited about this part of the work sometimes that I dream about it," she said. "I wake up and think, Gee, maybe tomorrow I'll get a flehmen on that particular peak." (She tends to refer to the samples as peaks, because this is how the various molecules show up in chromatographic analysis.) "The research wouldn't interest me half as much if I couldn't see the elephant do the flehmen."

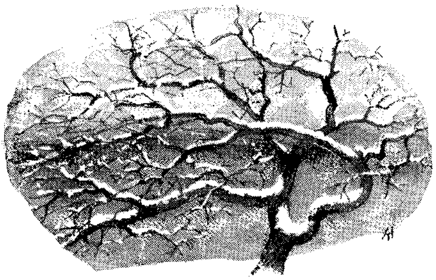
Bets has become something of a connoisseur of flehmen, with an aesthetic appreciation of the different styles. Tunga, she told me, will shake his trunk to "clear his palate" between samples. The idea of elephant flehmen was for a long time unacceptable to many conservative biologists; they considered true flehmen a behavior limited to hoofed mammals, and possibly cats. Most mammalian species are now thought to exhibit some form of flehmen, but one reason it took so long for elephant flehmen to be recognized is the trunk. No other animal has one, so there are no analogies. Another reason is the speed of the gesture; while Tunga has a leisurely approach, Packy is fast—his trunk whips in and out of his mouth in a few seconds. Bets was immediately able to see the gesture for what it was because she was looking for a pheromone. She believed, because of the results of Schmidt's original sniff testing, that a pheromone had to be there. In turn, pheromone presence suggested flehmen, and so did a vomeronasal organ. In late 1981, after she became certain of the flehmen, and was able to obtain a series of photographs of the behavior, she submitted an article to *Science*. At first, she received what she refers to as a "scathing" review by the journal's referees. "I was heavily criticized for having used only two bulls," she said. "I just drew on my knowledge of the literature and fought back." In July of 1982, the article was published, as a cover story, but the idea was not widely accepted for several years.

There is a constant interplay between olfaction—smelling the urine and, perhaps, the pheromone—and the perception based in the vomeronasal organ. (Eric Albone points out that we have no word for that perception.) But in the tiny concentrations used in the bioassays there is so little urine left that no noticeable odor remains. The perception is thought to be occurring entirely within the vomeronasal organ, long a mysterious place. In 1983, Bets had an opportunity to study one when Mike Schmidt made the difficult decision to euthanize Tuy Hoa, the Vietnamese gift of gratitude. Tuy Hoa had congenital skeletal problems and suffered from severe arthritic and foot pains. The zoo's only previous adult elephant death had been Thonglaw's, and he had been buried, with enormous trouble, in an isolated spot on the grounds. ("The problem with a dead elephant is that you don't have the time for an autopsy which you might have with, say, a monkey," Schmidt told me. "You have ten thousand pounds of decaying flesh to deal with, and in a zoo any death is a very unpleasant situation, which everyone wants to get through as soon as possible.") Tuy Hoa was "disarticulated" with chain saws and incinerated after an expeditious autopsy. Bets took Tuy Hoa's head and attempted to remove the vomeronasal organ, a cigar-shaped white tube about a foot long and tightly bound in the middle of the skull above the soft palate. She was only partly successful. A few years later, a circus elephant died suddenly in Portland, and again she managed to obtain the skull. She worked through the night in a cold-storage room, and in about eight hours had removed the vomeronasal organ almost intact. She began to prepare a paper with anatomical drawings. This past summer, a colleague in Africa sent her the organ of a fetal African elephant, and she was able to work up comparisons. But questions remained. She was uncertain about how the organ connected to the nerves and glands, and exactly how it sat within the bone. Then there was another death in the Washington Park herd, when Susie apparently suffered a reaction to a routine drug.

"I'd just walked in the door from a trip," Bets recalled. "I was exhausted, and the phone rang. It was an opportunity I couldn't turn down, because there were probably five major questions I still had about the anatomy. With the circus elephant, my major objective had been to get as much of the organ out as quickly as I could, so that I could accurately determine the histology and cytology. Once I learned that Susie had been dead for four or five hours, I knew there was no point in looking for that. The thing to concentrate on was the anatomy. We can only speculate, on the basis of what we know from other animals, about what happens on the receptive side of the vomeronasal organ. You can't put a compound labelled with a fluorescein dye there and let the animal flehmen and then cut the skull apart to see how far up the vomeronasal organ the dye went. You can't do electrophysiological tests, so you can't know the response of the bipolar neurons inside the organ."

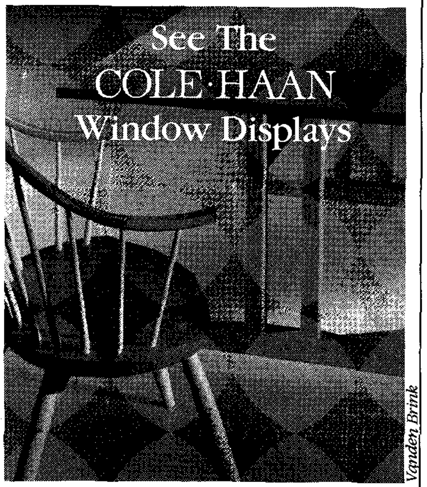
She could, however, map the anatomy. "I spent five days on Susie's skull, usually about eight hours a day," she said. "I went very, very slowly. The most fascinating thing is the enormous size of the sinuses. The elephant brain is back behind the ears, in line with the eyes, and all the stuff above that is sinus—incredibly honeycombed pockets. I dissected part of the skull with fine dissecting tools—the kind a neurosurgeon uses. In many places, I had to go through four inches of bone with a metal cutter. Then I would take photographs, and label the whole thing along the way."

She is not, however, immune to loss. The dissections were a strain. "I had to cut Tuy Hoa's trunk off. I'll never forget that. She had been dead three hours, but it felt as if I were killing her. With Susie, the eyes were there. Someone came and took the eyeballs out—I never could have done that. I would find it impossible to dissect Sunshine. I'd just say, 'Forget it.' But I guess if the guys are cutting them up for disposal, then I should be there getting the information, and I can't afford to be sentimental. If it was hard for me, it must have been *really* hard for Roger and Jay and Jim. I firmly believe in my own research. If I didn't believe in it, I would have quit about five years ago, because the last three or four years have been slow going. I can't believe I've been working so many years on this. That's one thing about working with elephants—you learn patience."



THE fecundity of the herd at the Washington Park Zoo masks the pressure on elephants in the wild, and captive breeding may be, as Mike Schmidt calls it, "the last hurrah" of Proboscidea. Schmidt continues to occupy himself with the ovulation cycle, but for several years he has taken his research in a particular direction—that of artificial insemination. The survival of the species can't be assured, he feels, by successful breeding in one herd, or even in several. The genetic pool is painfully small; he estimates that in the United States at this time there are three hundred and twenty-six Asian cows and eighteen Asian bulls. And the Endangered Species Act has, since 1976, made the importation of Asian elephants virtually impossible.

"Artificial insemination is the best way to insure the genetic variability of domestic elephants," he told me. "And it will also have implications for managing wild elephants. If you have a population of no more than five hundred elephants, they will sooner or later become extinct—though that sounds like a lot of elephants—because there's not enough genetic diversity. But if you take just six other animals every twenty years and inject them into that population it can go on forever. Where are you going to get those six unrelated animals? You're going to get them from your domesticated herds. But there are problems with A.I. in the case of elephants. If your timing is off, you've got a four-month wait. And elephant anatomy makes it difficult—you have to go four feet to get the



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cervix. The route is circuitous—up, over, and down—and requires flexible fibre-optic tubing. Managing that and preserving the sperm adequately are going to take years and years of work."

Several months earlier, Schmidt had travelled to Thailand for a conference on elephant preservation and presented some of his research on artificial insemination. Another of his goals, he said, had been to persuade Asian elephant handlers to encourage their working bulls to breed. "I'm eager to collaborate with the Asians, because *they have the numbers of animals*," he told me. "Almost everything we've done, from the beginning, has been geared to practical application in the field. You could develop a terrific research method for inseminating elephants using stereomicroscopes and manipulation of embryos, or something, but so what? There might be only three places in the world that could do it. So how can we take the knowledge and turn it into a practical method to use on thousands of elephants? We can't save the Asian elephant single-handed, even by building a monster zoo in America."

There is one profound problem to solve if artificial insemination does succeed, and that—once again—is musth. "Suppose A.I. is gloriously successful, and you've got all these pregnant cows," Schmidt said. "Half the calves are going to be males. In ten years, most of them are going to be shot. It's not responsible to get into that situation—you have to have some way of dealing with surplus males. Some will be kept for breeding, but what are you going to do with the rest? Well, you can castrate them. They can be work elephants, they can be exhibit elephants. What about a little zoo in the Midwest with one elephant—an Asian cow that's never going to be bred? She should be in a social group, yet they've got room for only one elephant, and, in any case, they can't afford a group of cows. Well, they could have a neutered male instead—he's going to be a docile animal, easygoing, happy-go-lucky, imprinted on people. He doesn't need to be with other elephants, or to breed, to be happy."

The castration of elephants has until recently been a fatal proposition; the testes are lodged in a web of circulatory vessels near the kidneys, and mortality from the surgery used to approach ninety per cent. In 1983, seeing the long-term need, Schmidt and several other veterinarians joined forces to solve the puzzle. The team has done six castrations so far, all on circus bulls facing execution as they matured and grew more dangerous. "We have yet to lose a bull," Schmidt told me. "We developed the surgical approach to the abdomen, and more understanding of the anatomy. And we know more about anesthesia now."

Schmidt is aware that some people consider all animal research exploitive. He is quick to point out that none of the elephant research at Washington Park contributes to human health; it is all for the benefit of the elephants themselves. "I think these animals' contributions will echo down the years," he said. "We always felt that way—that they were contributing to the preservation of their species. I tell them so—'Pet, *you're making a contribution to your species.*' She has more than paid her dues."

RECENTLY, I visited the elephant barn again, stopping first at the elephant museum, next door, which opened in 1986 and is privately funded. It is a half-moon-shaped building filled with ceremonial helmets, paintings, and tusk rings—the trappings of the human relationship with all things elephantine. Its centerpiece is the complete skeleton of a mastodon, on permanent loan from the Smithsonian Institution; it seemed unimposing here, so near the living thing. Then I walked over to watch the cows awhile, as they tossed hay about and rocked in place, their spongy feet compressing and springing back with every beat. Rama, back from the zoo in Tacoma only a few weeks and still nervous, was darting back and forth in a quarantine room, his trunk wild and fast. (Bets told me that when she splashed a sample of urine from Rosy, Rama's mother, on the freshly washed floor of the room he flehmened thirty-five times in a row.) Packy was in the crush, relaxed, downing carrots, seeming not to know —or care—that he couldn't walk out at will. Jay Haight took me right to the bull's gigantic, warm side. His trunk, as thick at its base as my torso and three times as long, snaked back to where I stood, questing for me. A wet print of his left forefoot had made a near-perfect circle on the concrete; Jay and I stood together inside it, with room to spare.

Roger Henneous was there, as he almost always is, his stained ranger's hat cocked back on his head, his feet spread wide on the damp, hay-covered floor. Behind him milled a wall of dusty gray. He talked about the research, and the keepers' efforts to help, no matter how great the inconvenience or the danger. A considerable amount of extra work is required of all the keepers, and much of it is dirty and difficult. "I have many times, over the years, found myself cussing and stomping my feet, wondering 'Goddammit, why couldn't I have taken up rabbits?' " he said, with a glint in his eye. "In the over-all scheme of things, our efforts here may not make a nickel's worth of difference. Not in the big real world out there. But no other breeding program like this one exists. If we can't—or won't—do the work, who will? We have the facilities, and we have the animals. If Betsey isolates and identifies the pheromone, then, theoretically, it can be synthesized. If it can be synthesized, it could be used to lure wild elephants from inhabited areas—essentially trick them out of harm's way. It could save a lot of bulls in Asia from getting the lead pellet."

Down the hall, Belle has planted her face against the crack of a door. Behind her in the room is a trio of younger cows. The elephant guards the tree of life; the elephant worships the moon and stars. Elephants were once supposed to have had wings. Belle greets me with a grim stare, blocking me like a house matron uncertain whether I'm fit to be let in. I stand quietly for the inspection. Her trunk slides up, loose and confident, and rapidly slips under my collar, through my hair, down my sleeve, my pant leg. This close, her trunk is enormous, the two huffing nostrils at the end strangely naked and pink, vacuuming in my smell, my volatiles, my self. All the while, she fixes her moist brown eye on mine. I remember—because I can't forget—photographs I've seen of butchered elephants. What was left of one bull knelt in apparent calm. The body, its head missing, was eerily still, as though waiting. John Donne called the elephant "Nature's great masterpiece . . . the only harmless great thing." As I submit to Belle's precise, intelligent examination, I remember that and the dead elephant's calm, and look straight back into her cautious and curious eye.

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

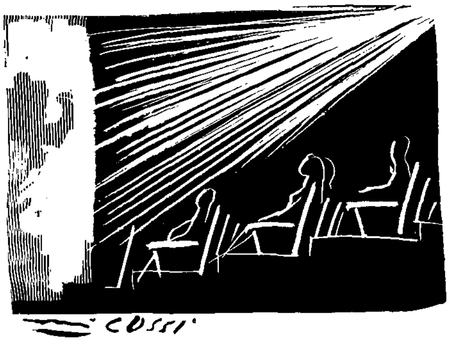
Fogged In

"The Accidental Tourist" begins with the numb grief of a Baltimore man, Macon Leary (William Hurt), whose twelve-year-old son was randomly killed by a gunman in a Burger Bonanza the year before. A travel writer, Macon turns out guidebooks for American business people who have to go abroad but don't want to feel they've left home. Macon has always been punctilious, a man who likes his comforts; he hasn't been after pleasure—he's been concerned to avoid the pain of disorder or the unknown. Now he's gone past his usual standoffishness: he's become such a depressed loner that his wife (Kathleen Turner) can't bear the way he has split himself off from their loss, and leaves him. Stiffly, timorously, he goes on about his work—an only half-awake man. The movie, which closely follows the 1985 Anne Tyler novel it's based on, is about Macon's coming to life.

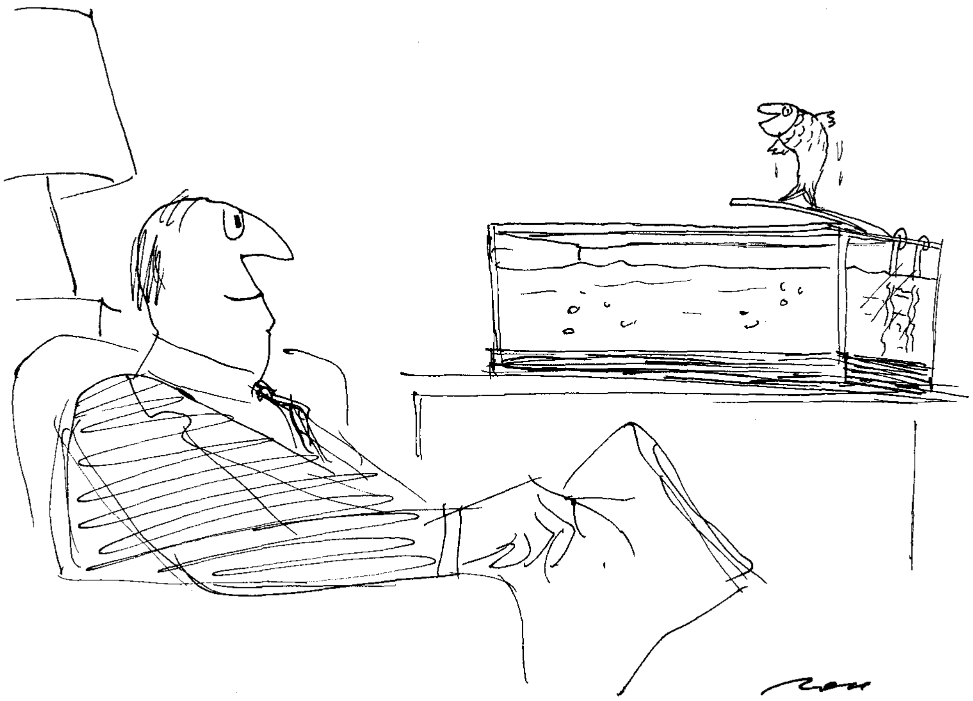
This happens through the agency of Edward, his dead son's Welsh corgi, who becomes unpredictable and snappish and, in a fluke accident, causes Macon to break his leg. Unable to care for himself, Macon has the excuse he needs to move into his grandfather's handsome Victorian house, where he grew up, and where his sister, who's in her late thirties, and his two brothers, in their forties, like him, live together, playing the card game they devised as children. They're four polite, methodical stick-in-the-muds and one unmanageable dog. It isn't until Edward has become a terror that Macon sends for a dog trainer, Muriel (Geena Davis)—a fiercely eager oddball who lives in a slum neighborhood with her sickly seven-year-old son. Muriel, who has Fu Manchu fingernails and wears plastic jewelry and jungle prints, reaches out to Macon and pulls him into her bed; her scruffiness and the messy confusion of her life turn out to be his salvation. The plot construction is that of a screwball comedy of the thirties: poor working girl has the life force that upper-class prig needs. But everyone here seems catatonic—even Muriel, whose tense talkativeness is as panicked as Macon's recessiveness and silence. Is she meant to be a forward version of Macon's shy family? Or does she seem near-grotesque because we're seeing her from Macon's stuffy, upper-middle-class perspective? I wasn't sure.

Parts of the picture seem to be taking place in a parallel universe, where people talk a formal, affected English that sounds counterfeit. And this cheerless universe (it lacks oxygen) seems to belong to William Hurt. Slowed-down, withdrawn Macon isn't just the central character; he's the only full character. Hurt is made up to look older and very pale; he gives a shrunk-inside-himself performance. He keeps us aware of a droll intelligence under the priggishness and the pain, but it's hidden. Most of the time he does his acting behind his eyes, as if he expected the camera to pick up his brain waves, and now and then it just about does that. The rest of the time, it doesn't, and he pressures you with all that sad-sack passivity. He's too mopish, too flat-voiced dull. (Macon must know that his guidebooks are at some level amusing, that they're self-satires. Hurt could use more resiliency.) It's true that when you're reading the novel everything except Edward's barking and biting does seem to go on behind the characters' eyes. But in the novel you know what's happening back there. Watching the movie is like trying to read a book with the covers closed.

If you're going to write a novel of sensibility on the screen, it had better be your own novel, your own sensibility. It may be a disaster, but the viewer isn't as likely to get the empty feeling of being on the outside staring reverently at not very much. There are, of course, ways for moviemakers to get inside a novel of sensibility—even one that's about loss and inertia—but the voice that attracts the moviemakers is what almost certainly dooms them to failure. They become dubbers. And in the case of Anne Tyler's novels, voice is everything; she has a fluky sort of precision—a fidelity to everyday eccentricity—that makes her writing enjoyable. The discreet, painstaking Lawrence Kasdan, who directed, and wrote the screenplay with Frank Galati, is so conscious of how he could go wrong by obtrusiveness that he hangs back. Temperamentally, he may have a real affinity with Tyler—they both like schematic whimsy. And Macon neatly packing his suitcase is almost uncannily like the dressing of the corpse in Kasdan's "The Big Chill." But Tyler keeps perking along, while Kasdan is cautious—paralyzed. He doesn't risk dubbing in his own voice (which isn't a strong one anyway). This "Accidental Tourist" has no voice. It's mute.



The minimal fun of "Tourist" has to do with our not having seen people like the Learys on the screen before. And toward the middle of the movie, when we get into the big family house and hear the four anesthetized siblings saying the things they've said a thousand times, Kasdan catches a wry, pixillated family humor. (It's close to Tyler's tone and to her patented compulsive families.) Amy Wright as the hopeful, organizing sister and Ed Begley, Jr., and David Ogden Stiers as the glum, serious-faced brothers make Hurt's Macon more believable; they're a fogged-in, reclusive family unit—they hold to their routines, like the travellers who follow Macon's guidebooks. They're all trying to keep senseless killers at bay. And when Macon's publisher (Bill Pullman) meets the sister and joins the unit you can see why the family's genteel lethargy appeals to him: he fits in; he has his own drollness, and the movie becomes funnier when he's around. The interactions of the Learys, snug in their home (it's their shell) and dedicating their hours to trivial pursuits, clearly touch Kasdan right on his funny bone. And there's something about this family of overgrown children that may touch all of us who grew up among siblings. But then Kathleen Turner, as the wife, shows up again, and there's no telling what she's doing or why Macon was married to her or what sort of life they had together before their son's death. (Did Macon function at normal speed



"And now, a triple gainer."

then?) Turner is the director's worst miscalculation; the novel offered no guidance, and you can't tell what he's directing her to show. She might be in a different movie, and you begin to wish she were.

The viewer's hopes all center on Geena Davis's skinny, volatile Muriel; in this ponderous, dead-zone atmosphere, the screwball-comedy structure gives you a rooting interest in her. She's the moral core of the movie—the person with inferior social status who recognizes the possibility of Macon's becoming a caring person. And once you've seen Macon show some feeling for what her undersized son goes through living in the slums among bullies you can't help wanting him to be a father to the boy, especially since Robert Gorman, as the kid, never gives an inch—he's a tough little weakling. (He isn't photographed to be a shiny-haired princeling, like the boy in Paris who reminds Macon of his lost son—a scene that has an almost homoerotic idealization.) Kasdan gets a clear-cut performance from Gorman, but he seems divided about how he wants Muriel to come across. A six-foot beauty, Geena Davis is cast against her looks; no one in the movie seems to notice that she's a full-lipped goddess. Davis has been given frizzy, lopsided hair, and has been directed to be twitchy and to talk in ungrammatical bursts (much like the Muriel of the novel). At the same time, Kasdan knows that Geena Davis has a lit-up quality, and he uses her to radiate a number of scenes. By the end, I was grateful that the cinematographer, John Bailey, made her so vivid, because in this movie once you're away from the comically inexpressive faces in the family house there's nothing to sustain you except looking at Geena Davis. (By then, Edward has gone the way of Hollywood dogs who have outlived their plot function.)

In a movie with such hesitant tempos, and a rippling John Williams score that's like some semi-serious Frenchie on a binge, it's impossible to tell if the desperate Muriel is meant to be spontaneous. But it's clear that she symbolizes change, and so moviegoers can extract something inspiring from "Tourist" and see it as a lesson movie, like "Ordinary People." That may help to account for some of the good press the picture has been racking up and the long lines at theatres. I found "Tourist" hell to sit through, but it has an audience appeal: it provides a new romantic myth of the eighties—a time of widespread remarriage and hoped-for rebirth. The film's gloominess doesn't keep it from being a crowd pleaser, because it leads to that final moment when Macon makes his choice—his "commitment." In the movie, as in the novel, he abandons his old emotional luggage. Essentially, this is a dating movie, like Claude Lelouch's "A Man and a Woman," but for darker times, for times of lowered expectations. The audience response indicates that the movie does get at some of the appeal of a novelist who writes of Macon's wife telling him that he and Muriel would be "one of those mismatched couples no one invites to parties," and of Macon's thinking that "he saw now how such couples evolved. They were not, as he'd always supposed, the result of some ludicrous lack of perception, but had come together for reasons that the rest of the world would never guess."

SISTERS aren't just doing it for themselves—they're also doing it to themselves. "Beaches," the first film from Bette Midler's All Girl Productions, probably started out trying to be truthful to women's experiences. As a mission, that can really snarl you up. The movie is about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Midler as CC Bloom, the show-biz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, the repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco. They're eleven years old when they meet on the beach at Atlantic City, in 1957; they write to each other during their girlhood, then share a bohemian apartment on the Lower East Side—yes, they bang on the radiators, and they also fall in love with the same man (John Heard). Over the decades, they're together in times of crisis, such as the birth of Hillary's baby daughter, and finally the movie turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with CC (now a singing star) staying at Hillary's side as she becomes ghoulishly pale from heart disease and lingeringly expires. Through this (slow, slow) deathwatch, CC learns to transcend her self-involvement; she becomes a better person, and—implicitly—a bigger star. The two friends, I think we're meant to understand, are two halves of an ideal woman. And by the end CC's indomitable spirit is in Hillary's child. (Is this New Age Egyptian—a twist on metempsychosis?)

There's a cadaverous feeling to the movie even before Hillary starts turning up her toes. Midler's CC has the

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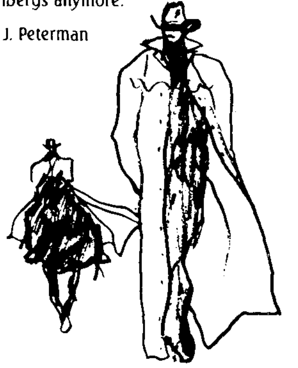

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living-every-minute quality that makes Midler such a vibrant presence, but Hershey's face has been wiped clean of experience. Even if you've seen her in “The Stunt Man,” “The Right Stuff,” “The Natural,” “Hannah and Her Sisters,” “A World Apart,” and other pictures, she's a stranger. Her newly puffed-up lips are only part of the change—her face looks as if it had been carved out of a bar of Ivory soap. And the creepy, behind-the-screen story of a talented woman turning herself into a Barbie doll (and acting like one) runs in your head along with “Beaches.”

The picture is rich in worst moments. Everything to do with CC's work at “a little theatre on the West Side” qualifies. And then there's CC in a musical number from her hit show; the berserk staging is a stunner—I haven't seen anything like this since the “Satan's Alley” number in Stallone's “Staying Alive.” There's Hillary, who has (temporarily) broken away from her background, reciting “Free at last.” Her other big scenes are dillies, too. And there's a dinner party, with the two friends and their husbands at Tavern on the Green, where CC is hailed as “the toast of Broadway.” Almost any scene qualifies except the scenes with Mayim Bialik as CC at eleven; this scrawny kid, with carrot-red hair and charming protruding teeth, has a show-biz humor that matches up with Midler and parodies her, too.

Midler also parodies herself. She overdoes herself: her bubbly life-lovingness is too professional and assured; her warm inspirational faucet keeps running. She's in good voice, especially in her pop-ballad version of “Under the Boardwalk,” but the score is maudlin, like the movie. Midler is showing us her soulfulness the way she did in her bag-lady mime in “Divine Madness.” Her instincts take care of her, and she's never really bad here, but if you ran “The Rose,” the first three-quarters of “Divine Madness,” or “Down and Out in Beverly Hills” and then looked at “Beaches,” I think you'd want to bash your head against the wall.

In one scene, CC is in Hollywood working in the movies; when the director, who's a vicious bum, insults her, she punches him in the face. This reference to the bad experience Midler had on the career-damaging “Jinxed!” might have more impact if by then you weren't thinking back on “Jinxed!” almost fondly. Sometimes the nice-guy directors do the performers in, too. Garry Marshall, who directed this picture, has no feeling for the material—not even false feeling. “Beaches” has no outstanding scenes, no highs; it just slogs along—those worst moments are the film's texture. The script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, from Iris Rainer Dart's novel, outlines the emotions for you. CC and Hillary tell you things like “We've grown apart.” Why are people in the audience weeping and applauding? It's the idea that gets to them, not the quality of the rendering. They've been primed to cry by “Love Story” and ten million hours of TV viewing, and maybe even by the sappy side of the women's movement. They've been primed to respond to singing stars who bare their emotions. Midler's CC is so down to earth it's a great-lady performance.

I SHOULD have known better, but I looked forward to “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels.” Michael Caine and Steve Martin as con men on the Côte d'Azur, in a remake of the 1964 “Bedtime Story”—it sounded plausible. And there's nothing the matter with the performances. Caine is the slick Continental who operates very discreetly, very romantically. His confederates drop a few words into the ears of pre-researched middle-aged rich American women; they let it be known that he's a deposed prince, and when the women learn that he is hard-pressed to support the anti-Communist troops who are trying to liberate his country they press greenbacks and jewelry into his reluctant hands—enough lucre to keep him in a great villa high on a cliff overlooking the sea. Martin is a happy-go-lucky American spaz in wrinkled baggy pants; he's an improviser, a vagabond who chases after the most attractive young women he spots, and shamelessly, in a loud, whiny voice, cadges meals and a few bucks off them. He has never set his sights any higher—not until he stumbles into Caine's smooth terrain. Then a light dawns in his face; it visibly flashes on. He blackmails Caine into serving as his mentor, and, in the movie's most artful, most Buster Keaton-like scenes, he stands and walks and lounges in a simulation of Caine's nonchalance. But the picture doesn't seem to have any faith in its own setup. After we watch Martin training to be dapper and imperturbable, we expect to see him screwing up and displaying his new sang-froid just when he shouldn't. Instead, the picture cuts to Caine, as the prince, discouraging one after another of the amorous women who want to take a royal husband home to the Midwest; he displays his brother—Martin as mad Prince Ruprecht, who is locked in the cellar. As Ruprecht, Martin is a simian, bent-over combination of the young Jerry Lewis and William Hickey in "Prizzi's Honor." This was the funniest part of the 1964 version (with David Niven as the sophisticate and Marlon Brando as the Hapsburg idiot), and, though misplaced, it's funny here, too. What it isn't is fresh or new.

The movie is mildly pleasant; it has amusing moments and a sunny sheen. But it's unexciting—it has no fangs, no bite at all. The original version had two big laughs (the Hapsburg idiot and a shin-whacking scene), and, with all the gloss that's been added, those are still the big laughs. Frank Oz, who directed, and Dale Launer, who reworked the 1964 script, by Stanley Shapiro and Paul Henning, are trying to get the public to buy the same package twice. They retain some of the worst ideas in the original, in a barely altered form. Caine is supposed to observe a code: he fleeces only those who can afford it. And he explains that he's a failed artist who takes care of beautiful things—the villa and the grounds and his wines and his art collection. We're supposed to accept him as a basically honorable fellow who's the custodian of a cultural tradition. (Do the moviemakers even know they're treating us as suckers?)

Oz and Launer had the chance to spark the women's roles, by giving the gullible do-gooders distinct personalities. The prince takes them to bed, and it might have been jolly to see this man who has such pride in his good taste adapting himself to their various dreams of a sheik. (If they were matches for him, he could have been forced to use his wits.) Couldn't the women at least have been smart and lusty? As marks, they're too easy—you just don't believe it. They're dithering dummies, and Oz directs all this neutrally, blandly, without any comic drama. (If the women didn't blur together, the film's ending would have more point.) Caine and Martin make a bet on which one can fleece a visiting young American "soap queen" (Glenne Headly), and she, too, is sweetly trustful as she listens to the hard-luck stories that gush out of Martin and the advice she gets from Caine. Headly's face is a comic mask, but she has no lines that bring laughs; she suggests a Maggie Smith robbed of her wit. (It isn't until the very end that she gets a chance to show some tartness.)

When the two men first meet, the boastful Martin says that he tells women "what they want to hear." There's a shade of contempt in the remark, but it's presented as simple, self-serving chatter, and the movie doesn't follow through. Here are two swindlers who live off women—who treat women as prey—and the question of how they feel about them never comes up. If Caine felt put upon by the aging women's demands or if he were lubricious and enjoyed the game, or both, the movie might not be so square. It might absorb more of your attention. I've sat through a lot of worse movies, but this one actually seems proud of its mediocrity.

It's disappointing to see Caine and Martin with nothing to do but show off their styles. They preen beautifully. Caine's comedy is in his tiny jaundiced, disdainful reactions to the American's antics: he has it down to a faint glimmer in the eyes, a slight tightening of the mouth, and the radar from his gleaming hair. The less he does, the more of a master actor he appears to be. (But if he carried urbanity any further he'd be dead.) Steve Martin's blank-eyed vulgarian is wonderfully moronic and crude. Martin takes his cue here from Caine and plays low comedy with high-comic finesse. At their best, they're like a vaudeville team zapping each other and doing a soft-shoe. But the script is such a lazy ripoff of the past that there's not much juice in the roles: we seem to be watching the last pressing of the grapes.

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MUSICAL EVENTS

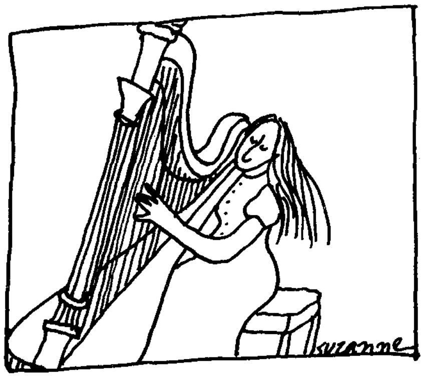
Ensemble

MY first concert of the year was given by Access, a new group, making its début in Merkin Hall. The players, familiar in other ensembles, are a "Pierrot Lunaire" quintet: Bradley Garner (flute), Edward Gilmore (clarinet), Curtis Macomber (violin), Theodore Mook (cello), and Aleck Karis (piano). Access declares as its aim "the exploration of new or obscure music." Each program is to be focussed on one composer but to include related works and also "recognized masterpieces." Roger Sessions was the protagonist of the first concert; the other composers played were Ernest Bloch (with whom Sessions studied), Mozart, and Schubert.

Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances, in Vienna, presented not only new chamber music but also large works in chamber-group or keyboard reductions. The Access concert ended with a substantial stretch of Sessions' epic opera "Montezuma" rescored by Richard Aldag for the quintet and two (guest) percussionists: the two tableaux (pantomime scenes) and Malinche's aria from Act II. The first tableau is set at the gate of Mexico City, where crowds muster to watch the meeting of Cortés, advancing across the causeway, and Montezuma, borne in ceremony through the city gate. The second is set at the base of the Great Pyramid while on its height eleven sacrificial victims are slaughtered. Then the scene changes to the royal garden, through which Malinche wanders, marvelling at its birds and beasts, until she reaches Montezuma's throne room. This is colorful, picturesque, beautiful music, an evocation in sound of sights that (in Bernal Díaz's words) "seemed like an enchanted vision from the tale of Amadis," so that the soldiers wondered whether it was all a dream. The original score is bright with the melodies of native flute players, the trumpet and drums of the Spanish company, the blare of the priests' conch shells, birdcalls in the exotic garden. Mr. Aldag's reduction is skillful: the colors are freshly and keenly re-created. In close-up, as it were, the movements of part against part could be heard clearly. The execution was more accurate, the musical focus sharper than in theatre performances where a large orchestra has been wrestling to master the whole huge score. Of course, much was missing: the full range of Sessions' palette, the stage pageantry. Imagination had to supply the scenes. Toward the close of Malinche's aria:

> The curtain parts, revealing the royal gallery. The last hour of the afternoon still floods the space with daylight, streaming unhampered from the open loggia outside, but its quality is shallow, and already one wax-lamp spots the chiaroscuro in a corner, already is discernible the red glow of the coals burning in a perfumed brazier. Montezuma sits high on a slender throne of almost gothic shape, shining with amethysts and fitted with pillows of pale hues.

"Montezuma," a great opera, is formidably difficult to perform. The two American productions it has received—Boston's in 1976, the Juilliard's in 1982—had high merits but were underrehearsed and ill-balanced. Berlioz's "Les Troyens" had to wait a century for a fully realized performance; planning should start now for one of "Montezuma" in Sessions' centenary year, 1996. Meanwhile, scenes in concert—such as Wagner gave of the "Ring" after the foundering of Bayreuth and before the general release of the cycle—could prepare the public for the splendor of the full work. The scenes chosen by Mr. Aldag should in their full symphonic dress commend themselves to Muti and the Philadelphia, Dohnányi and the Cleveland, Blomstedt and the San Francisco; and in Hei-Kyung Hong, the Juilliard's Malinche, there is a shining Met soprano on hand for the aria that closes the sequence. The Access conductor, Cliff Colnot, lurched and flailed as if he had a hundred sluggish, not seven alert, players before him but secured a vivid and exciting performance. Christine Schadeberg's Malinche was sensitive, deliciously accurate, and pleasing in tone except when she pushed high B-flats and B's into squawks. But an enthusiastic chamber ensemble in a small hall can drown a singer as readily as can a full orchestra in a large one.



Sessions' Duo for violin and cello had its first performance. This is the first movement of a composition that in 1978 he set aside in order to write, for the Boston Symphony, the exuberant Concerto for Orchestra, the last work he completed. Mr. Aldag had prepared for performance the only movement near-finished, and he has retrieved for the repertory a moving and beautiful piece of music: Sessions at the height of his powers, mingling poetic reverie, in the lovely, *tranquillo* opening and close, with a dashing *allegro con spirito* main subject and a *cantabile* contrast. There are one or two small bumps in the progress. In a program note Mr. Aldag revealed that, while most of the jottings in the composer's draft score gave clear instruction, such an annotation as "lengthen" could not be acted upon "without substantial recomposition"—from which he refrained. Bumps excepted, the movement is late Roger Sessions at his most lovable, personal, and questing. I long to hear the piece again.

Mr. Karis played Sessions' Waltz (also 1978). He played it from the score—accurately but dutifully, as if it were a piece that he had got up for the concert, rather than one that brought him delight he had to share. The music didn't dance and lilt. The evening began with Schubert's late, magical Notturno, for violin, cello, and piano, which was warmly and lovingly played; I feel Beckmesserish in regretting that for the first subject the strings indulged in quite so throbbing and modern a vibrato, and that Merkin's Hamburg Steinway is boomier, more blatant, less singing than any piano Schubert could have known. The Bloch was "Two Last Poems (maybe . . .)," of 1958—almost his last work, composed in the shadow of death. (That "maybe" turned into a "not quite": two suites for solo violin and one for solo viola, cut short in its finale, complete his catalogue.) "Two Last Poems (maybe . . .)," written for Elaine Shaffer and orchestra, was played here in a flute-and-piano arrangement, and its poignancy was reduced.

Miss Schadeberg and Mr. Gilmore joined in Mozart's soprano-and-clarinet aria "Parto, parto," from "La Clemenza di Tito," with Mr. Karis supplying the rest of the orchestra from the keyboard. It was good to hear two adventurous artists inspiring one another to subtleties of emulous inflection; it was strange to hear Miss Schadeberg producing "blunt endings"—bald repeated notes—to phrases that were in Mozart's day and are once again, generally, in ours rounded with appoggiaturas. Mozart's Trio for clarinet, viola, and piano followed. Mr. Gilmore was captivating in his timbres, his inflections, his articulations. "Pierrot Lunaire" calls for a violinist who can take up the viola (Hans Keller deals with the Viola Player—along with the Opera Producer, the Music Critic, the Psychoanalyst and Psychiatrist—in the "Phoney Professions" section of his book "Criticism"), but Access had engaged a guest violist, Mary Hammann. Neither she nor Mr. Karis came close to matching Mr. Gilmore's animation and charm; beside him they seemed scorebound.

AT my second concert of the year, there was ensemble playing on the highest level: a Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center recital, in Alice Tully Hall, given by the Emerson String Quartet. The Emerson was formed at the Juilliard in 1976. For ten years, its personnel has been stable: Eugene Drucker and Philip Setzer alternating as first and second violins, Lawrence Dutton as viola, David Finckel as cello. Long admired, the ensemble has now moved into the front rank of the world's quartets. I thought so when, early last year, it gave what seemed to be a peerless account of the Debussy Quartet, at a Metropolitan Museum recital, and thought so again when, at a fall Carnegie Hall recital, it played Bartók's six quartets in sequence. Last year, too, the Emerson was taken up by Deutsche Grammophon: a disk of Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" and Beethoven's Opus 95 and a two-disk album of the Bartók quartets appeared.

The Tully recital, like that at the Met, began with the Debussy. I qualified "peerless" above because this later performance surpassed it. Debussy

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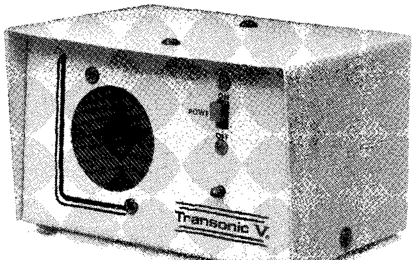

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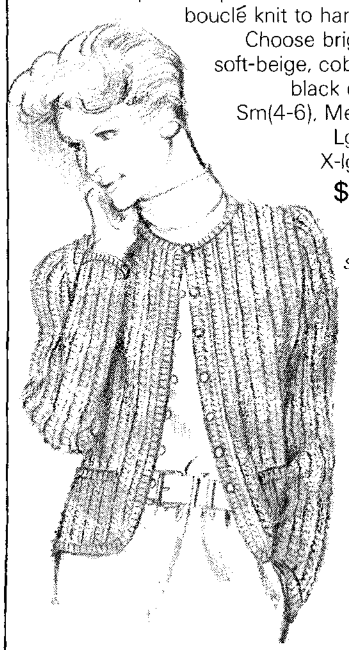

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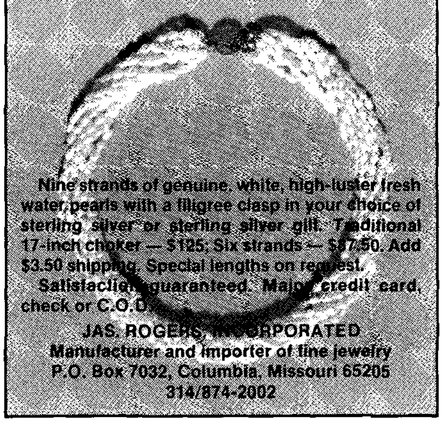

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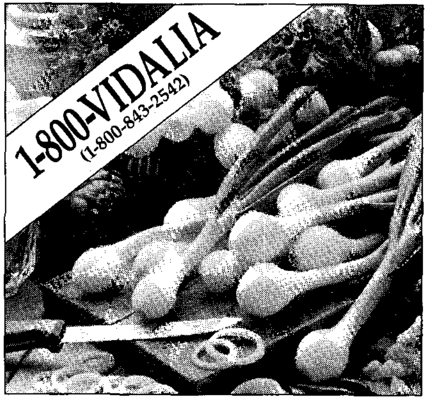
dedicated his work to the Ysaÿe Quartet, which was by all accounts a fine-grained, sensitive, aristocratic ensemble. In the Tully intermission, a young American composer told me that, having grown up with the Budapest records, he had missed "wildness" in the Emerson performance. What I heard was mastery: of the boldness that Debussy displayed in 1893, manifest in the shaping and reshaping of motifs and in the driving force, latent rather than extrovert, that impels the music. The Emerson has the traditional string-quartet virtues: each player is a strongly characterized individual, and any solo passage is eloquently seized, but the ensemble is temperamentally as well as sonically in balance. The four minds play upon each other, and upon the work, in perfect harmony; the players are in tune in all senses of the phrase. If one of them should be captured by a sudden, new inspiration, he could follow its prompting confident of his partners' understanding and support. The color range is wide. From it are excluded forced, strident, or over-emphatic tones. The volume ranges from whisper to full-throated chorus; the sound is never overfatted, never saccharine. One of the Emerson's distinctions is a fearless, stylish use of portamento—a resource regular in the days when Debussy and Bartók first wrote but one that few modern string players employ. Mr. Drucker's sighing sixth at the start of Bartók's First Quartet is a good example; the unmechanical treatment of the figure at its numerous reappearances—the degree of portamento determined by context—is evidence of the Emerson's sensibility.

The new work at the museum concert was John Harbison's Second Quartet, composed for the Emerson—one of many Harbison pieces that had New York premières last year. The new work at the Tully concert was Richard Danielpour's Quintet for Piano and Strings, a Chamber Music Society commission; Ken Noda was the pianist. Danielpour, born in New York in 1956, is being played quite often now, but so far I have formed no clear impression of his musical personality. The first movement of his quintet, "Annunciation," is energetic and busy in a Hindemithish way. The central slow movement, "Atonement," opens with a rather beautiful, long-sustained passage of slow string counterpoint,



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followed by a chordal cantilena from the piano. The finale, "Apotheosis," is busy again, now with Coplandish moments. All three movements seemed to me unnecessarily protracted. But I must give the piece another try and will watch for the WNYC broadcast of the concert.

The *Gramophone* reviewer of the Emerson's "Death and the Maiden" disk, while owning that one cannot be sure without having heard the group in the flesh, says, "I would guess that their *fortissimo* is generally more impressive than their *pianissimo*." "Death and the Maiden" ended the Tully concert, and there the Emerson's various shades of pianissimo—not only in the variations movement but in the contrasts of the very start, in the Trio, at the launch of the prestissimo close—stilled a large, fidgety audience to rapt attentiveness. The Schubert and Beethoven quartets were recorded in the famous Music Hall in Troy, the Bartók quartets in the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. The Carnegie Bartók concert, with two intermissions, lasted just over three and a half hours. Any fears that the "odyssey," as it was billed, might seem inartistic or overweening were soon dispelled: traversing thirty years of Bartók's exploration, consolidation, new exploration was a constantly enthralling adventure. Again, someone remarked that the players were perhaps not "wild" and "fierce" enough for some episodes. I did not agree. In the first movement of No. 1, the banged cello pedals, the impassioned recitative from the viola and the second violin, the thin, high shine of the first violin were exciting. In No. 4, there was hornet buzz in the muted Prestissimo, plangently nasal singing from the cello in the Non Troppo Lento, hard, biting attack in the finale. The Allegro of No. 5 was splendidly vigorous, the Andante even more mysterious than usual. The records confirm the prismatic quality that informed the Emerson's playing.

—ANDREW PORTER

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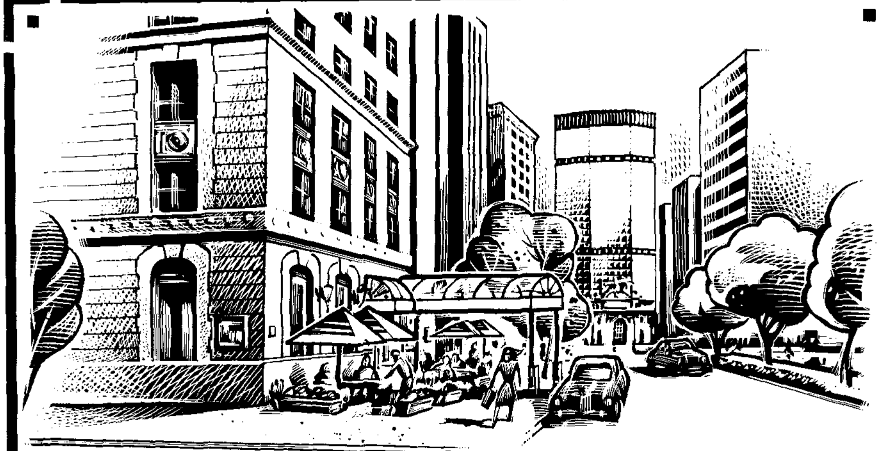
A recent survey conducted by the Sunbelt Institute of Atlanta, called "Workforce Literacy in the South," indicates that one in three Texans are functionally illiterate.—*Andrea Jarrell in the West Austin (Texas) News.*

And the other two is a little careless sometimes.



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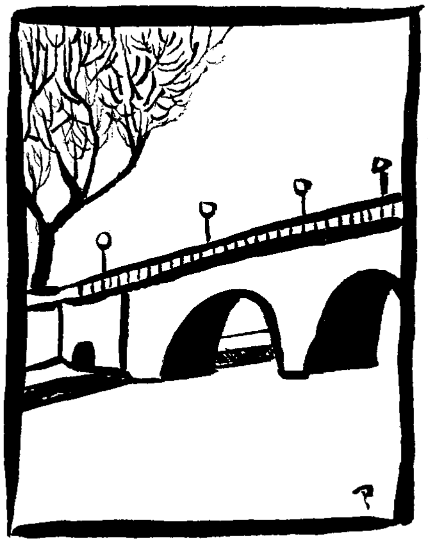
REFLECTIONS

THE TRIUMPH OF CAPITALISM

LESS than seventy-five years after it officially began, the contest between capitalism and socialism is over: capitalism has won. The Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe have given us the clearest possible proof that capitalism organizes the material affairs of humankind more satisfactorily than socialism: that however inequitably or irresponsibly the marketplace may distribute goods, it does so better than the queues of a planned economy; however mindless the culture of commercialism, it is more attractive than state moralism; and however deceptive the ideology of a business civilization, it is more believable than that of a socialist one. Indeed, it is difficult to observe the changes taking place in the world today and not conclude that the nose of the capitalist camel has been pushed so far under the socialist tent that the great question now seems how rapid will be the transformation of socialism into capitalism, and not the other way around, as things looked only a half century ago.

Yet I doubt whether the historic drama will conclude, like a great morality play, in the unequivocal victory of one side and the ignominious defeat of the other. The economic enemy of capitalism has always been its own self-generated dynamics, not the presence of an alternative economic system. Socialism, in its embodiments in the Soviet Union and, to a lesser degree, China, has been a military and political competitor but never an economic threat. Thus, despite the rout of centralized planning—to judge by the stories coming from Moscow, it has the proportions of a rout—one would have to be very incautious to assume that capitalism will now find itself rid of its propensity to generate both inflation and recession, cured of its intermittent speculative fevers, or free of threatening international economic problems. Nevertheless, *in one very important* respect the triumph of capitalism alters the manner in which we must assess its prospects. The old question "Can capitalism work?," to which endless doubting answers have been given by its critics, becomes "Can capitalism work well enough?," which is quite another thing.

Even such hedged speculations are regarded with suspicion by most of the members of my profession. Modern-day economists sedulously avoid scenarios of long-term capitalist development—a caution that was not shared by the great economists of the past, virtually all of whom wrote boldly about prospects for the system. What is perhaps more surprising is that, although they disagreed about many things, those economic thinkers were near-unanimous in depicting the prospects as gloomy. Adam Smith, for example, believed that the society of his time, which had not yet been named capitalism, would have a long run but would end up in decline. Marx, of course, expected the demise of the system, but so did John Stuart Mill, whose "Principles of Political Economy" was published in 1848, the year of Marx's "Manifesto." The most important Victorian economist, Alfred Marshall, warned against socialism and unconsidered changes, but his very Victorianism—he called for "economic chivalry"—makes us squirm a little as we read the exhortative concluding words of his "Principles." His pupil and protégé, John Maynard Keynes, was of a different mind. Only a "somewhat comprehensive socialization" of investment, he wrote, would rescue the system from intolerable levels of unemployment. Even Joseph Schumpeter, the most conservative (and the least publicly known) of these magisterial economists, asked in his famous "Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy," in 1942, "Can capitalism survive?" and answered, "No. I do not think it can."



THUS, I imagine that the great economic prophets would be taken aback by the present turn of events. No doubt it is possible to conclude from these failed predictions that present-day economists are right in shunning long-run prognoses. I think, however, that a more useful lesson can be learned by asking why the worldly philosophers were wide of the mark. Three general answers can be given to that question. One of them, of which we still hear echoes, has to do with the limited expansive possibilities for the economy. From Smith on, many observers have depicted the process of capitalist growth as that of occupying a given territory of opportunity. This view was certainly visible in "The Wealth of Nations," which speaks of the long ascent's coming to an end when a country has finally attained "that full complement of riches" to which "the nature of its soil and climate" and "its situation with respect to other countries" entitled it. What Smith had in mind was a condition of market saturation. In the opening pages of the "Wealth" he presents a vivid description of a ten-man pin manufactory whose improving productivity formed the basis for the improving well-being of the larger society. It is entirely reasonable to foresee a future in which the market would be flooded with pins, to the extinction of any incentive to continue the process of productive betterment. With the benefit of hindsight, it is also very clear that such a view rests on a static conception of economic growth. Smith did not see that his petty manufacturers were corporals with field marshals' batons in their knapsacks, who would transform and vastly extend the economic opportunities before them—that ten-man pin factories would give way to thousand-man iron foundries and ten-thousand-man steel complexes. Keynes was similarly bemused by a bounded conception of the nature of economic opportunities: "Two pyramids, two masses for the dead are twice as good as one," he wrote in 1936, "but not so two rail-

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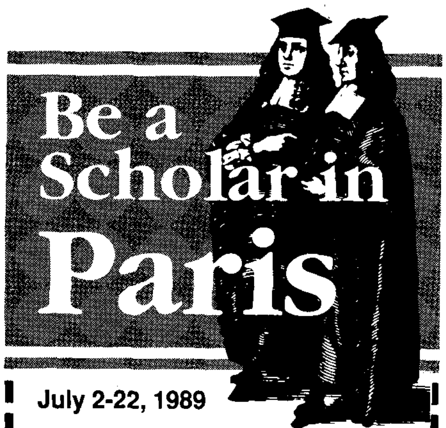
ways from London to York." He did not foresee that capitalism would generate the computer, nuclear energy, and the jet plane within thirty years of his likening its prospects to those of building a redundant railway.

The fear of exhausted opportunities is still sometimes voiced by economists seeking to project the gross national products of the United States or the Organization for Economic Coöperation and Development nations during the next few years. One need only extrapolate the production of cars or personal computers a few years ahead to depict a world drowning in these goods, as Smith's world seemed about to drown in pins. Yet the lesson of the past is assuredly that market saturation is a transient, not a permanent, condition of the system, both because its driving impulse has continually extended the technological frontiers of the economy and because the special province of capitalism has always been finding ways of expanding its commodity frontiers by moving activities from the sphere of personal life into that of profitable business. Particularly in modern times, every generation has extricated itself from satiety by reinventing its own "standard" of life. Even Marx, who was keenly alive to capitalism's capacity for generating outlets for expansion, would have been nonplussed by the extent to which such once wholly noneconomic pursuits as family entertainment, meal preparation, housework, and exercise have been "commodified" by TV, precooked foods, detergents, and running shoes.

In addition, the increasing reliance of business on research and development has made scientific inquiry itself part of the life process of the system. Thus, fears that capitalism will run out of things to do appear much less plausible than they did in the past. There is no doubt that important markets may become saturated—there is a limit to the number of cars the world can accommodate, as there is to the number of pins it needs—but the long-term process of expansion has bypassed saturation by discovering or creating new commodities, and that process does not suffer from the same fixed capacities for absorption that limit the demand for specific goods. Steel reaches its peak, but plastics and ceramics take its place; the market for cars is clogged, but that for high-speed rail transport begins to open; the Sony Walkman has shown how even strolling along can be put to profitable use. God knows what profitable invasions of our remaining privacy await us. In this never-ending search for overlooked crevices in which capitalism might grow, or for wholly new endeavors it might undertake, there is no doubt that individual nations will fare differently—some neglecting and some encouraging the research or education that opens the technological frontier, some aggressive and some defensive about opening up the commodity frontier. But by all indications we live in a period of extremely rapid scientific advance, part of which will very likely result in new commodity possibilities; and the rout of socialism itself opens up virgin territory to the extension of capitalist enterprise.

SHEER physical saturation has, however, played only a minor role in the dour forecasts of the economic philosophers. Keynes, despite his rather unfortunate railway analogy, based his prognosis not on material limitations of the system but on economic ones—not on the intrinsic lack of any need for a second line from London to York but on the lack of enough purchasing power to buy all the tickets on the first line and thereby establish a possible demand for a second. Quixotically, this lack of purchasing power was itself the result of a failure on the part of business to undertake enough investment projects—railways and others. A pessimistic appraisal of the investment outlook led to insufficient employment on investment projects; and this, in turn, resulted in an insufficiency of the purchasing power needed to make such projects profitable. Given this catch-22, which is one of Keynes' enduring contributions to economic theory, it is not surprising that he looked to the "socialization" of investment as necessary to avoid economic stagnation.

Marx's scenario was not hobbled by a static view of the capacity of the system for inventing new technologies and developing new commodity wants, but it, too, had its catch-22s. These were based on inherent conflicts—contradictions, Marx called them—between the needs of individual enterprises and the working requirements



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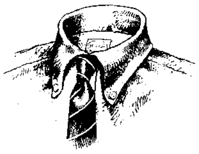

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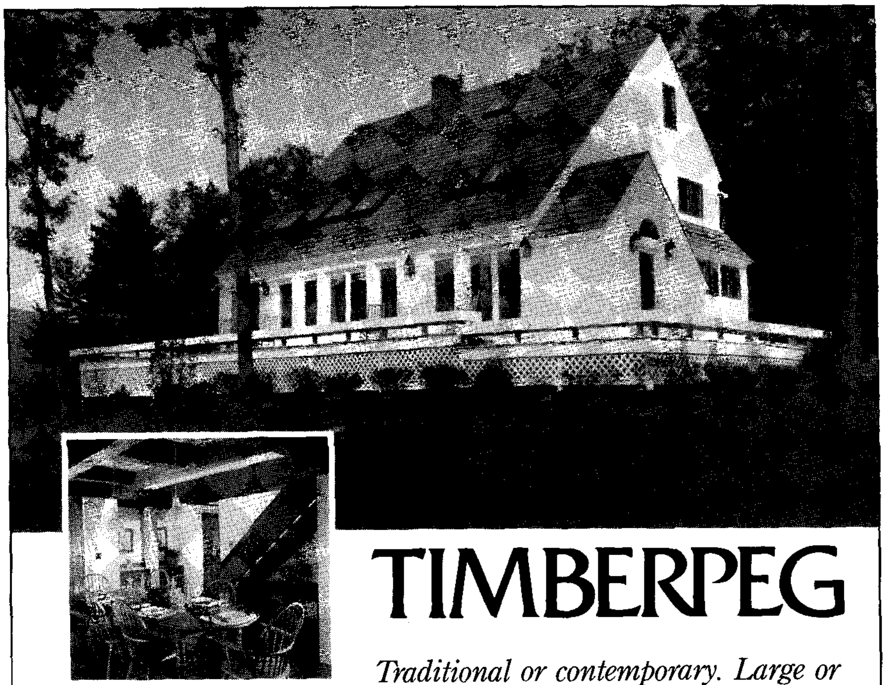
for the system as a whole. One of them was the tendency of capitalism to undercut the buying power of the working class by the continuous introduction of labor-saving machinery, to which business was driven by the pressures of competition. Each enterprise thereby sought to steal a march on its competitors, but instead all enterprises found themselves facing a condition of underconsumption. It is summed up in the perhaps apocryphal story of Henry Ford II walking through a newly automated engine factory with Walter Reuther, the legendary organizing figure of the United Automobile Workers, and asking, "Walter, how are you going to organize these machines?"—to which Reuther is supposed to have answered, "Henry, how are you going to sell them cars?" Another contradiction foreseen by Marx was the erosion of profit rates—not purchasing power—which stemmed from this same substitution of machinery for labor. According to Marx's analysis, labor power was the goose that laid the golden eggs of profits, because employers were able to extract more value from their workers than they paid out as wages. The replacement of living labor by machinery constricted the base from which profit arose, and thus ultimately reduced the rate of return on capital. And well before Marx, Thomas Robert Malthus (whose fame as a demographer has obscured the fact that he was the first "professional" economist, employed by the East India Company) worried about the possibility of a general glut—a general insufficiency of purchasing power. From the moment Malthus's fears were voiced, they were the subject of refutation and ridicule and, because they were not very cogently put, were easily dismissed. But every time a depression has come, the spectre of a general glut has reëmerged. Indeed, it can be argued, I think, that the lurking question of economics, certainly during the present century, has been whether a capitalist economy will experience general gluts, under whatever name.

An immense body of theory has been built on, about, and against the master theories of Marx and Keynes and their distant predecessor Malthus, and a vast amount of research has sought to produce evidence that profit rates have indeed fallen or that inadequate purchasing power has acted as an undertow against growth. It is fair to say that the debate remains unsettled. Keynes' skepticism, like Marx's more precisely structured doubts, remains a matter of contention, as vigorously denied by conservative theorists as it is maintained by more radical ones. Nor does an appeal to the facts entirely resolve the matter. On one side we have the powerful demonstration that the march of capitalist performance has been upward for two centuries. According to the calculations of the economic historian W. W. Rostow, manufacturing output has increased at an average rate of 2.8 per cent per year—not a terribly impressive figure until one realizes that it has multiplied production more than seventeen hundredfold during that period. On the opposite side is the succession of interruptions to that march, the worst of which, in the nineteen-thirties, threatened to bring the system to a halt, and possibly to bring it down. Fifty years of research has not definitely established that the rate of profit does fall or doesn't fall. In the more recent past, too, there are contradictory signs. The last seven years have been a period of steady economic expansion in the United States—perhaps the longest uninterrupted such period in its peacetime history—but they have also been a period of rising and intractable unemployment in Europe and of worsening poverty and increasingly ill-distributed income at home: the economist Robert Hamrin has recently pointed out that in 1986 the top twenty per cent of all American households received 46.1 per cent of all pretax and pretransfer income, while the bottom twenty per cent received 3.8 per cent—income before taxes and tranfers being the best way to show how raw market forces work. Thus, our much-touted boom is also the period in which we have set an all-time American record for disparity of income.

One can hence review the record and conclude that our present condition is either a prelude to much worse or evidence of how well we have avoided the ominous-seeming prospects of the past. That ambiguity of interpretation leads me once again to introduce the distinction between "working" and "working well enough." Adam Smith wrote that there is a great deal of "ruin" in a nation, meaning that its capacity for enduring misfortune was much greater than its critics often supposed. That worldly-wise point of view may be on the ascendant. Most economists on the left today claim that capitalism is working badly, but I do not think that many of them would venture to say that the system is about to collapse. On the conservative side, many economists believe that the intrusion of government impairs capitalism's inherent capacity for growth, but I do not think that even the most pessimistic of them expects the system to fail even if government does its worst.

THIS retreat from the generally more apocalyptic views of the not so distant past emphasizes an aspect of the future to which economists often fail to pay sufficient heed. It is that the decisive factor in determining the fate of capitalism must be political, not economic. Schumpeter, for example, expected capitalism to disappear, but not because of any strictly economic difficulties. The stumbling block was cultural. "Capitalism," he wrote, "creates a critical frame of mind which, after having destroyed the moral authority of so many other institutions, in the end turns against its own; the bourgeois finds to his amazement that the rationalist attitude does not stop at the credentials of kings and popes but goes on to attack private property and the whole scheme of bourgeois values." Schumpeter anticipated a painless metamorphosis of capitalism into socialism, by which he meant a presumably democratic, planned economy run by the former managers of capitalism. Marx would have scoffed at Schumpeter's low appraisal of capitalism's self-esteem, but he, too, laid its ultimate downfall on the doorstep of political, not economic, events. Capitalism would be progressively weakened by its economic crises, but, in the famous words of "Capital," the "knell of capitalist private property" would not sound or the "expropriators" be "expropriated" until the working class arose to take things into its own hands.

Schumpeter obviously did not anticipate the present-day resurgence of conservative self-confidence, nor did Marx expect that working-class attitudes and politics would become middle class. Despite their recognition of the importance of mustering and holding the faith of its participants, neither man fully grasped the capacity of the system



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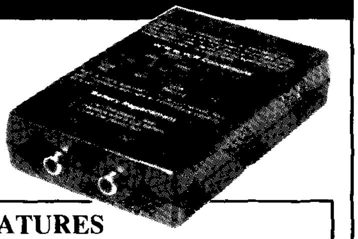

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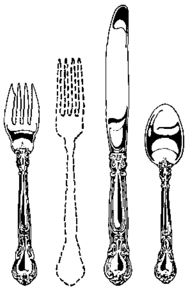

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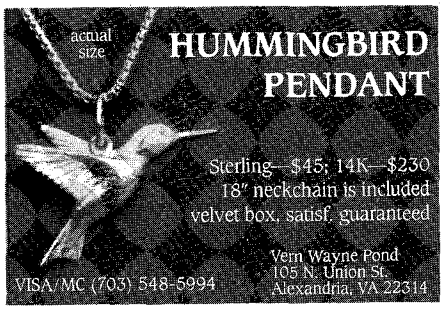

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to do so. This is so, I believe, because neither sufficiently appreciated that capitalism is a social order built upon a deeply embedded and widely believed principle expressed in the actions and beliefs of its most important representatives. From such a viewpoint it is comparable to imperial or aristocratic or Communist regimes, with their universally accepted principle of kingship or aristocracy or socialism, embodied in the personages of monarchs or lords or sacred texts. Capitalism is not normally thought of as possessing such a principle, but its largely uncritical worship of the idea of economic growth is as central to its nature as the similar veneration of the idea of divine kingship or blue blood or doctrinal orthodoxy has been for other regimes. Suggesting that capitalism can be likened to a "regime" rubs our sensibilities the wrong way, but the word is useful in forcing us to consider capitalism as an order of social life, with distinctive hierarchies, imperatives, loyalties, and beliefs. It is this regimelike aspect of capitalism that turns Schumpeter's feared rational skepticism of its privileges into a rationalization of its rights, and makes the *working class, far from the opposition* that Marx hoped it would become, into stalwart supporters.

The idea of a regime also illumines the nature of its central, dominant, "ruling" class. Immanuel Wallerstein, one of the most influential modern economic historians, has suggested that regimes are, save in moments of convulsion, characterized by the presence of one standard-bearing, "universal" class. I have always pictured such a class as regarded by all, including itself, as the living and legitimate embodiment of the aims and sentiments of the entire society. Thus, it is not only lords and monarchs who believe in their intrinsic superiority but the peasants, who throw their caps in the air. If we ask what group in Western societies occupies this position of untroubled self-regard supported by the general esteem of the people at large, I think the answer would be its capitalists, under their workaday title of businessmen. Individual figures in government may be revered, military leaders admired, but neither politicians nor generals put their own group's interests forward as those of the larger society. With due recognition given its well-publicized villains and its occasional bad repute—the counterpart of bad kings and outbreaks of antimonarchism—it must be conceded that the class of businessmen is the only group that naturally thinks of itself, and is generally thought of, as speaking for the social order as a whole. In this uncomplicated sense, business is the universal class of the regime of capitalism.

ALTHOUGH most businessmen would bridle at these terms, recognition of the regimelike character of capitalism and the "universality" of its business class seems to me indispensable in understanding the capacity of the system for withstanding critical assaults and for disarming political disaffection. People in business never think of themselves as the equivalents of kings or lords or commissars, for the very good reason that they are not. And the reason they are not is that capitalism is unique in history in having not one but two centers of authority, one built around the "economic" prerogatives of the business system, the other around the "political" prerogatives of the governmental system. In all other societies, from primitive to socialist, *a single source of authority*—village council, king, priesthood, party —makes both the determinations of war, law, and public ceremony, which we recognize as political, and the decisions on what shall be produced and how it shall be distributed, which we call economic. A seamless cloak of authority thus extends over the entire social structure, endowing every aspect of it with the aims of whatever group makes up its universal class. Under capitalism, this cloak is torn in two, and the realm of activities having to do with material life is removed from the reach of political authority. Capitalist governments still make fateful decisions of war and peace, or law and order, but are excluded from what is elsewhere a first prerogative of rulership—direct command over the material resources on which rulership must depend. When we look at the economic realm, we discover an even more astonishing constriction of authority. Capitalists, in whose name the system is organized, no longer possess the basic powers that accrue to persons of similar importance under earlier systems; unlike the most minor feudal lords, for instance, they cannot try, imprison, or forcibly muster "their" work forces, or enjoy the privileges of a legal code

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different from that applicable to other groups, much less promulgate laws or command military forces within their own bailiwicks. Thus, the two realms of authority help us understand why, unlike lords and kings and commissars, capitalists genuinely feel themselves to be without power.

It is not surprising that the establishment of two realms of authority sets the stage for what has always been and will always be the most difficult problem of capitalism—managing the relationship between the two realms. To judge by the talk that occasionally comes from the business community, that relationship is one of opposition and hostility; at times, one might think the government to be a foreign force that has temporarily occupied the capital, like the British in the War of 1812. I think it better to start from the opposite perspective—that ordinarily the government endorses the aims and objectives of the business community and bends a great deal of its efforts toward creating a framework within which business can operate smoothly. This business-oriented cast of mind is partly a consequence of the fact that the political realm, having surrendered authority over the workings of the economy, is now dependent on its smooth running to provide the wherewithal to carry out government programs, but on a deeper level it simply reflects the fact that the political realm and the economic realm are both parts of a single regime. Calvin Coolidge spoke the truth, however naïvely, when he said that "the business of America is business."

At the same time, it is obvious that the two realms live in uneasy coexistence. The objective of the economic realm is the organization of activity into whatever forms can produce a profit. The objectives of the political realm are two—the assertion of national sovereignty and the preservation of domestic tranquillity. In the normal course of events, the pursuit of economic life takes place within and offers no challenge to these *raisons d'état*, and, as a normal thing, the exercise of sovereignty and the cultivation of domestic peace support, and do not collide with, the overriding *raison d'entreprise*. But there are also built-in dissonances between the aims of the two realms. The aims of capital are as fragmented and individual as were the aims of the hundreds of feudal lords in

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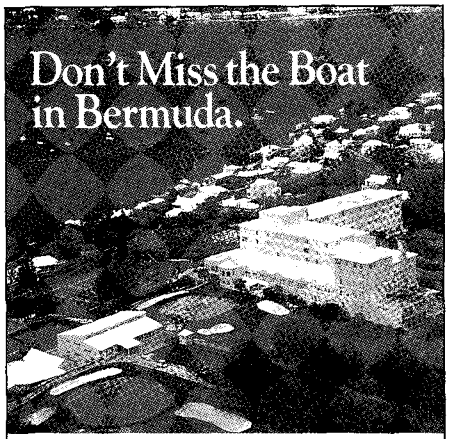

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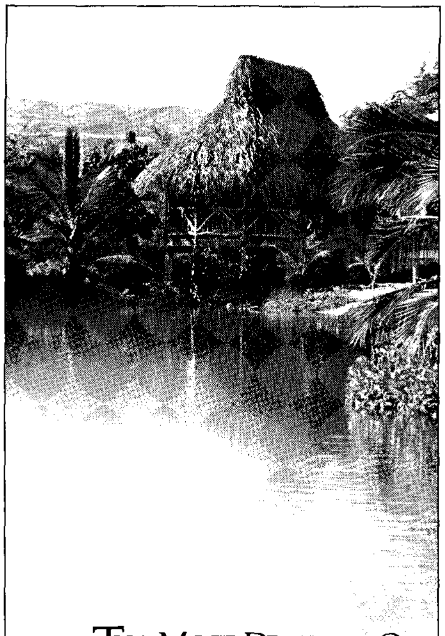

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the Middle Ages, each lord seeking his own aggrandizement, and no lord concerning himself much about the fate of feudalism. In similar fashion, each major corporation—not to mention the vast population of smaller businesses—is of necessity concerned with its own balance sheet, and is not in a position to affect, although it may worry about, the place of the nation in the world or the state of morale within the nation's borders. Government thus plays the role of the Holy Roman emperors who sought—on the whole, unsuccessfully—to defend and advance the cause of empire against its foes, including not least its own petty bickering, internal warfare, and social excesses. Governments of capitalist economies are also charged with the need to oversee, restrain, adjudicate, and correct tendencies of the economic realm that may arise from the uncoördinated or shortsighted or simply harmful operations of its individual members. These efforts may take such forms as Theodore Roosevelt's trust-busting campaign, the gradual growth of sentiment that resulted in the passage, in 1913, of the Federal Reserve Act, and Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Whether on narrowly focussed or broad issues, and quite regardless of which side is "right," this difference between the worm's-eye and the bird's-eye view introduces an inherent source of friction into the regime of capitalism.

LOOKING back, one sees that the boundary between the realms has moved in two directions. From the eleventh century, when the mercantile estate began to establish its place within the feudal hierarchy, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the authority of the economic realm expanded at the expense of that of the political realm. By 1776, "The Wealth of Nations" was able to delimit the proper economic reach of "the sovereign" to only three functions: "first, the duty of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individ-

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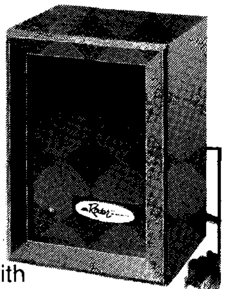

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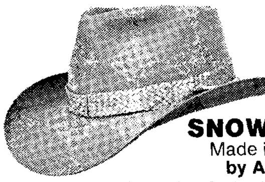

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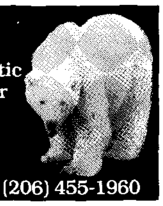

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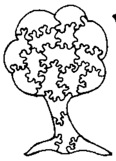

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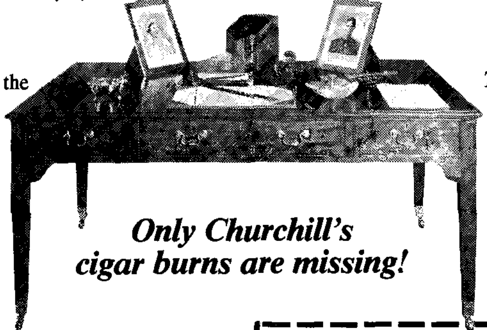
ual, or small number of individuals, to erect or maintain; because the profit could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society."

Although it was certainly not Smith's intent, this minimalist prescription would actually permit a very large government sector—defense, the entire system of law and order, and the provision of what has come to be known as "infrastructure," including (with Smith's explicit approval) public education. What is conspicuously missing from Smith's list is any license for government to carry on or regulate or otherwise become involved in the workings of the market system. Yet, as the examples of the two Roosevelts and the passage of the Federal Reserve Act illustrate, the boundary has moved in precisely that direction since Smith's time, starting with the English Factory Act of 1833, on whose inspectors' reports Marx was to rely heavily for his indictment of the factory system. Since then, of course, the boundaries have extended the reach of government into the economic realm both through the enactment of various entitlements to income, from workmen's compensation to social security in its various forms, and by the more or less official assumption of government responsibility for the over-all level of performance of the system—the latter perhaps first reaching its present-day form in the efforts of the New Deal to "pump up" the economy.

From the beginning, these reassertions of the ancient extent of the public realm have been fiercely debated. Conservative economists, fully as much as businessmen, have feared that the redrawing of the line in favor of the government would cause the goose to lay fewer golden eggs; liberals have feared that a failure to exercise public regulatory or supportive power would threaten the life of the goose. Although the terrain is still contested, I think it is by now abundantly clear that there exists no divinely, or even rationally, ordained division of responsibilities between the realms. At least in the post-Second World War era, the United States has tended to take a somewhat more hands-off attitude than have other capitalist nations, but it is difficult to draw lessons from a comparison of the two policies in practice. During the nineteen-seventies, it



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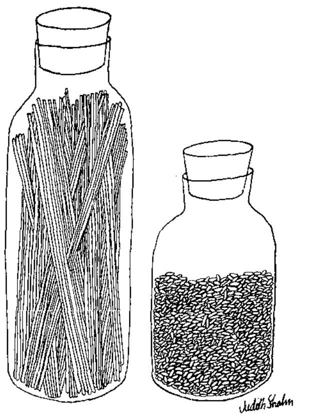
seemed that the European style, which featured a good deal of talk and some action toward "concerting" or even "planning" national action, was better suited to promoting economic growth and high employment than the American: European nations enjoyed almost twice the growth of the United States and suffered only about one-half its unemployment. Recent experience, however, has led to a different conclusion. During the nineteen-eighties, United States growth outstripped European growth, and the American employment record—nineteen million jobs created in a decade—is the envy of the Common Market nations. In similar fashion, Great Britain, virtually the only strict constructionist across the Atlantic, seemed to be paying a high economic price for Margaret Thatcher's determination to dismantle the government-supported economy in the first years of her Prime Ministership, only to emerge in the last two years as the fastest-growing economy in Europe. On the other side of the fence is Japan, where the line of demarcation is drawn in a fashion that bewilders Western observers, blurring the government-enterprise border in ways that have led to its characterization as Japan, Incorporated.



This latitude of workable configurations does not mean, I should add, that it is still possible to relocate the economic-political boundary where Adam Smith placed it. The map has been redrawn in all capitalist nations, not just some, and although the specific elements of the terrain which are allowed to remain on one or the other side differ from one country to the next, all reflect a common enlargement of the political realm. This common movement suggests that the division of authority is affected by forces that override idiosyncrasies of individual place and history. One of these forces is surely the increasing power of industrial technology to puncture the protective mantle of the environment—a development that has moved all governments to intervene in the productive process to safeguard the human habitat against the disturbances caused by industrial processes and products. As an illustration, about five per cent of all state and local government employment in the United States exists just to cope with the automobile. A second force must be the growing urbanization of society. Cities have always been the seats of government, and the proportion of American citizens living in cities has increased from about a third in 1900 to over three-quarters today, a trend duplicated in all nations. Yet another force pushing for larger government has to be the increased concatenation of the economic realm itself. The economy of Adam Smith's day, with its many small farms and workshops, could be likened to a pile of sand, composed of innumerable small units of enterprise, each rubbing up against similar small units. Today's economy can best be compared to a girdered assemblage where miscalculations or shocks affect or threaten the entire system. Smith did not write about large-scale economic breakdowns, as Marx or Keynes did, because a sandpile economy does not manifest the instability of a girdered one.

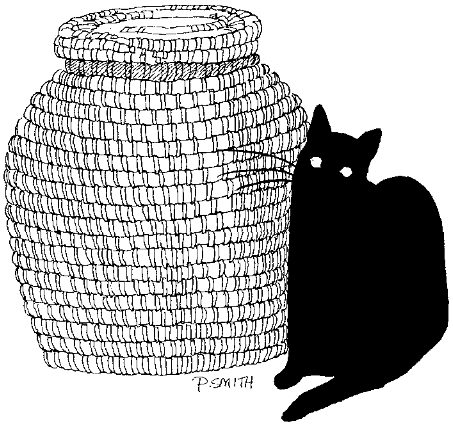
Thus, a central cause of the century-long and universally apparent movement of the public-private boundary toward the side of government reflects the conservative political nature of capitalism much more than it does any emerging economic radicalism within it. Government extends its reach into the economic realm to cushion, restrain, or offset disruptions that emerge from the shuddering industrial machine in the basement. To the degree that the growing visibility and importance of government is due to these self-generated forces, the outlook is certainly for a continuation, and probably an extension, of the long historical trend toward the enlargement of the governmental realm. The disruptive power of technology, the complexity of urban life, the concatenation of the economy are all likely to increase—perhaps dramatically, in the case of technology—bringing with them the need for the government to mount more repair efforts, which usually get blamed after a while for creating the damage they are trying to repair.

THIS likely development would, however, be no more than an extension of a long-term trend in the division of authority. More significant is the growing encroachment of the economic realm upon the very core principle of the political realm, its sovereignty. Here the threatened salient lies along the boundary line that divides the international concerns of the economy and the state. Before the arrival of capitalism, there was an obvious conflict of interest along this salient between the merchants and the aristocrats—the precursors of the two realms to come. Medieval merchants bringing their packtrains across the face of Europe needed and sought the political protection of the rulers through whose domains they moved but were suspicious and fearful of those rulers, the lords. The lords, similarly, needed and sought the marvellous objects brought by merchants from faraway lands, but were suspicious of a social group over which they held no rights of vassalage and who entered and left their domains in a manner that they were certainly not prepared to allow their own subjects to do. This tension between the border-blind view of merchantdom and the border-bound view of dukedom was lessened as the structure of capitalism gradually took shape, and in time the two realms acquired their symbiotic relationship. By the eighteenth century, the aims of government were generally conceived as congruent with those of the economic community and, by the nineteenth century, as properly subordinated to it—*raisons d'état* always excepted. Free trade was then everywhere defended as the logical extension into the world market of the competitive discipline of the domestic market—a process that would ultimately enrich, and therefore strengthen, the nation-states whose economies would be subjected to this Darwinian winnowing process.

None of the leading economists, then or later, seem to have remarked that competition at home produced depressed areas as well as boom regions, and that it might have similar effects on an international scale; and even those members of the underworld of economics—such as the early-twentieth-century English reformer John Hobson, who interpreted free trade as a weapon of the rich against the poor—agreed that the internationalization of economic relationships was unquestionably in the interests of the capitalist nations themselves. Hence no one perceived the international extension of the economic realm as a threat to political sovereignty. The reason, we can now see, was that the international economy was itself still in its formative stages. Enterprises were still mainly situated in and entirely identified with their mother countries. International finance linked stock exchanges, but modern international banking was still in its infancy—one travelled abroad with letters of credit. An enterprise in Hamburg or Dayton could not possibly exercise continuous supervision over production flows of manufacturing subsidiaries in Bangkok or Mexico City, and, in fact, had no such subsidiaries. The enlargement of the international exchange of currencies to a level at which it exceeded by tenfold the entire value of the goods and services that crossed national boundaries was beyond the dreams of any banker and certainly beyond the technical capacities of the world's hand-operated banking system. The possibility that corporations in one country could clone themselves in the poorer regions, whence they would export automobiles, cassettes, high-density computer disks, and synthetic fabrics to their home markets was never discussed, because it was never remotely realistic.

All these developments are, of course, commonplaces of modern economic life, and a great deal of anxious attention is currently being paid to them. What is not so much discussed is that this movement represents a remarkable change in the complexion of capitalism itself, a change that threatens a considerable part—though, of course, not all—of the prerogatives of the political realm. Can a nation-state still effectively control its own currency, whatever its constitution may say, if currency flows into and out of its banks in volumes that vastly overshadow the size of "its own" money supply? Can it accurately assess the condition of its balance of trade if a significant fraction of its imports comes from its own companies situated abroad? Can the Darwinian process be counted on to strengthen national power if the outcome of the process is that companies situate their productive capacity outside the boundaries of the home country? I have avoided using American names and examples, because the questions apply to Germany and Switzerland as much as to the United States. The multinational corporation and the growth of a vast network of international finance affect the political independence of all capitalist governments. In the same way, the nascent transplantation of capitalism to parts of Asia and South America—symbolized in the meteoric rise of South Korea—affects the political hegemony that has until now belonged to the capitalisms of North America, Europe, and (more recently) Japan.

These deep-seated changes, present and latent, suggest that the boundaries of the two realms will be further readjusted in the foreseeable future, as the political realms within the older capitalist nations seek to protect their sovereignty against an unexpected threat from their own economic bases. In the emerging contest between the two realms—a contest in which the imperatives of expansion, efficiency, and profitable growth are pitted against those of inviolability, integrity, and independence—I will place my chips on the political side. The economy energizes people to work; the polity inspires them to work together. Men and women will not only salute a flag but fight and die for it—something they will not do for any corporation. The ultimate mobilizing power of capitalism lies in its political, not its economic, half, even though its dynamism and drive derive from the latter. The boundary of the realms is therefore very likely to move again toward an enlargement of state prerogatives with respect to the compartmentalization, quarantine, or buffering of the international reach of capital. The forms and the successes and failures of this reassertion of political prerogative cannot be foretold in particular, but the general movement can, I think, already be discerned under the name "protectionism."



IT must seem like a major oversight that I have left until now any discussion of the role of democracy within capitalism. I have done so for two reasons. The first is that capitalism, unlike all other major regimes in history, tolerates democracy but is not itself indissolubly dependent on it, as Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, apartheid South Africa, and, until recently, dictatorial Chile amply illustrate. The second reason is that the democratic aspect of capitalism appears both as a source of strength and as a problem. The strength lies in the active involvement of citizens in the determination of their collective political life—a counterpart of their personal involvement in the achievement of their collective economic advancement. The problem is that this selfsame political involvement generates a tension within the larger regime, in that the economy kowtows to wealth and income but the polity bows to the general electorate. Because the distribution of wealth and income is highly skewed, the economic realm is inherently a plutocracy, the eager servant of the rich, the deaf servant of the poor. Because the political realm is organized in democratic fashion, it caters to voters, and the vote of the millionaire counts for no more than that of the beggar. The conservative friends of democracy in every capitalist country have worried about the possibility that the masses might take advantage of their voting strength to undo the economic framework of inequality, but the shrewdest among them—starting with Adam Smith—have seen that the regime acquires political cohesion, because it is in "human nature" to admire one's superiors, not resent them.

Nonetheless, there is an inherent pulling apart in a social order composed of two realms—one built on the

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verticality of wealth, the other on the horizontality of democracy. In this remarkable joining of dissimilars, the political function of the governmental realm is not merely to protect, guide, and superintend the economic process but to prevent it from delegitimatizing itself with the voting public. This has been a motivation of the political sphere which has gained importance as democratic forces have gained strength. The history of every democratic capitalist nation is one of a widening provision of "entitlements," over the nearly universal opposition of business, because from the viewpoint of government these measures have seemed necessary to retain and strengthen the fealty of its citizens.

The political commitment to entitlements, especially in the United States and Great Britain, has waned in recent years, and what seems a fierce debate surrounds the question of whether it should move backward or forward. Nonetheless, the bone of contention is no longer the principle of entitlements but their reach and level, much as the quarrel over the government's responsibility to sustain the economy concerns ways and means rather than whether or not. I suspect, therefore, that political logic will tend to prevail over economic, which is to say that considerations of solidarity of the regime will take precedence over those of sheer efficiency. In all this, the touchstone remains whether the politico-economic system as a whole will work well enough—that is, well enough to maintain the businessman in his position as the representative of the universal class. That depends, of course, not only on the severity of the economic contradictions that capitalism is certain to generate but also on the nonbusiness classes' enthusiasm for—or, at least, acquiescence in—the continued "universal" status of business values. At the risk of sounding banal, I do not see how one can answer the question other than by suggesting that there are likely to be successful and unsuccessful capitalisms, the former maintaining the "animal spirits" (as Keynes called them) of its economic life and the general liberties of its political realm, and the latter moving slowly or abruptly toward something like Schumpeter's anticipated managerial "socialism," only uglier. The characteristics that will sort out capitalisms into one or the other of these categories

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are apt to be institutional adaptability, ideological pragmatism, and common decency, the international distribution of all of which appears to be as uneven as the distribution of natural resources, although much, much more important.

Even such a relatively open-ended assessment leaves unasked the difficult question of whether capitalism could long continue, even in its most successful instances, if shattering explosions of technology or massive relocations of industrial power should alter the present technical and geographical framework of power. That is a question we can leave for our grandchildren. The question for our children is whether the capitalism in this country will be one of the successful examples. Given our lack of a national labor or employers' federation to work out a policy on wages and industrial management essential to the control of inflation, our timid and disorganized view of what government's guiding role might be, and our indifference, bordering on hostility, to the large and wretched underclass that has appeared in recent years, I do not see how one can offer bland assurances in answer. Yet candor leads me to recognize that the national performance has been adjudged good enough by the electorate. History is no doubt the final arbiter in these matters, but history does not vote.

AND, finally, what of socialism? As I said at the outset, I do not think that the triumph of capitalism means its assured long and happy life or that the defeat of socialism means its ignominious exit from history. The collapse of centralized planning shows that at this moment socialism has no plausible economic framework, but the word has always meant more than a system of economic organization. At its core, it has stood for a commitment to social goals that have seemed incompatible with, or at least unattainable under, capitalism—above all, the moral, not just the material, elevation of humankind. However battered that conception may be from the designation of bloody and cruel regimes as "socialist," the vision has retained its inspirational potential, just as that of Christianity has survived countless autos-da-fé and vicious persecutions. At a more down-to-earth level, the great question seems to be whether the still centralized economies can duplicate the remarkable coexistence of realms which has provided so much of the success of capitalism. As the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe allow an increased autonomy to their managerial cadres and encourage the growth of entrepreneurial activity in the crevices of their economies, we find the ingredients of a new universal class; but if socialism is truly to make way for such a class, more will have to be ceded than the capacity for acting without consultation with the authorities. What is crucially at issue is whether socialism can accept a second republic within its own borders—a republic of economic affairs with its own rewards, punishments, imperatives, and ideology, without which the republic of political affairs seems unlikely to acquiesce in the all-important limitation of its powers.

Would this mean, in effect, the transformation of socialism into capitalism? This is to ask how closely capitalism, under its most democratic impulse, could approach socialism, under its most economically open arrangements. Sweden has always been the living example, real or slightly imaginary, of a system whose economic realm is unmistakably capitalist but whose political leaders have often declared their admiration for socialism, and sought—successfully, on the whole—to move toward its egalitarian standards. This raises the vision, once popular with political scientists and economists, of a historic "convergence" of systems that has grown increasingly less plausible in the light of the immense gulf between the performances of the two social orders. Perhaps the vision will again become a matter for serious consideration if the extraordinarily difficult movement of centralized socialism toward economic and political liberation is not derailed, and if the drift of capitalism toward a more responsible amalgam of economic freedom and political responsibility continues its slow historical advance. Mutterings of both right and left to the contrary, there is no evidence that at least some capitalisms could not progress in this direction. Whether that will be possible for centralized socialism we simply do not know. Meanwhile, for both sides the immediate aim is to create systems that will work well enough. Despite the triumph of capitalism, that is not a matter to be taken for granted, least of all by us.

—ROBERT HEILBRONER

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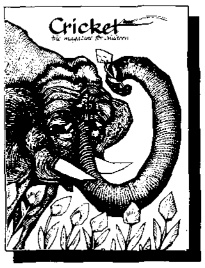

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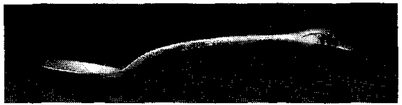

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IN FASHION

Selling Montana

AT seven-thirty sharp on a Monday morning in Paris, Kalman Ruttenstein, the senior vice-president in charge of fashion direction for Bloomingdale's, is sitting like Old King Cole at the head of a long banquet table, presiding over a breakfast for some fifty Bloomingdale's employees in a private dining room in the Hotel Intercontinental. Halfway down the table, Marvin Traub, the store's chairman, pays close attention. Ruttenstein reads his speech from a typewritten booklet like the ones students prepare for their term papers—this one complete with color-Xerox illustrations—as his listeners, heads bowed piously over their own copies, follow along. Twice a year, during the ten-day marathons when the French ready-to-wear collections are shown to buyers and members of the press, Ruttenstein delivers an address to the Bloomingdale's troops: the buyers of clothing, accessories, cosmetics, and even home furnishings; the window designer; the art director—to everyone whose job it is to smooth the way for fashion at the juncture where the runway meets the street.

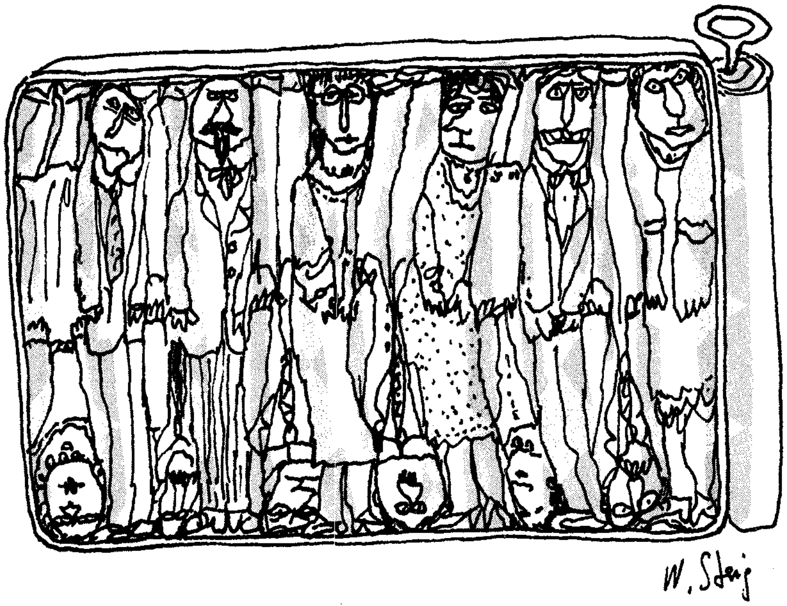
Though Ruttenstein talked in definitive pronouncements, reminiscent of the days when fashion took a more imperative tone ("Snug and short is over. Long, loose, and wide is new; the pyramid shape is key"), this year's spring collections were being shown against a backdrop of widespread conjecture about the slump lately in retail sales. The idle conversation between shows was about how bad business had been, about how well this fall's menswear had sold (proof that consumers had money to spend) while the women's clothes were still sitting in the stores, about how resistible women seemed to be finding fashion these days.

Whatever the reasons for the drop in sales, it provided the occasion for all sorts of people to vent their hostilities toward fashion. There were journalists and store executives who blamed the designers, pointing to the recent scuffle over skirt lengths, and interpreting the decline as nothing less than a boycott: women were sick and tired of being told what to wear, and they weren't going to take it anymore. (This explanation is based on what I call the conspiracy theory: the idea that fashion is something that designers foist off on women, who would otherwise be wearing clothes that are comfortable, reasonably priced, and stylish, year in and year out—a deceptively feminist-sounding notion predicated on a rather drastic misunderstanding of human nature.)

The woman in the street was polled. She claimed that the clothes the designers were offering had no relation to the life she led. She balked at the prices. She complained that when she went to the store to buy a navy-blue skirt she got lost in a maze of designer boutiques and left empty-handed. Clearly, the days when women would meet in the morning to shop, have lunch in the department store's "tearoom," and then go off to the movies or the ladies'-day matinée, are gone. For most of us, shopping isn't a pastime. But many stores—department stores in particular—have been slow to change, to reinvent themselves in response to the changes in our lives. In New York, Bloomingdale's has pioneered the idea of the department store-as-theatre, with displays like stage sets, and of the department store-as-museum-gallery, with a costume exhibition on the selling floor. Saks Fifth Avenue and Bergdorf Goodman have proposed the department store-as-force-for-change-in-the-community, taking the charity fashion show—formerly a ladies' luncheon—and turning it into a gala benefit evening in honor of one or several designers.

Eleanor Lambert, who has a publicity agency in New York, remembers a time, in the late nineteen-thirties, when she tried to persuade Adam Gimbel, then the president of Saks, to advertise the names of the designers the store carried, and he refused, on the ground that the Saks label in a garment gave the customer all the prestige she could want. Since then, of course, the balance of power has shifted, and designers, having gained the upper hand, are now celebrities, revered for their talent and for their taste as it applies not only to clothing but to furniture, sheets and towels, stationery, and chocolates. The broad consensus that fashion used to be has splintered into a few dozen designer cults, and many stores now present themselves as showcases for those designers. Meanwhile, as more and more stores launch private-label lines, more and more designers are opening their own stores, selling all the products that bear their name under one roof, where they can control the presentation. If the retailers are becoming designers, the designers say, then we will become retailers.

Whatever else stores may be today, they are still media through which all sorts of information, most of it unspoken, is conveyed. They bring the world to us and tell us something about what other people, in other places, are thinking. A woman with an interest in fashion may consult her local newspaper or *W* for its coverage of the collections, and she may leaf through *Vogue* or *Elle* or *Harper's Bazaar* to see how it has made sense of the clothes being shown. But the better part of what many, if not most,



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women know about fashion—about specific designers and current styles—they acquire by shopping. Designers project a carefully thought-out image of themselves in their work and in their publicity. But in the end it is the stores that represent the designer to the customer, and different stores may represent a designer in very different ways.

At the Bloomingdale's breakfast, Ruttenstein acknowledged the customer's recent indifference to the clothes the stores were offering. "We are coming off a fall '88 season in which customers did not respond to simple, clean, tailored looks," he said. "Prices and skirt lengths were blamed, but lack of fashion excitement failed to stimulate women emotionally." He had been scouting the market, he said, surveying American designers, attending the shows in Milan, London, and now Paris, searching for new developments that might spur fashion forward. What he had found was "a new sophistication, as defined most daringly by Claude Montana."

Since striking out on his own, twelve years ago, Montana has occupied a curious place in Paris fashion. No one disputed his talent, and his shows, everyone agreed, were not to be missed, but when his clothes were featured in magazines or discussed by people in the business the praise was carefully measured. He was regarded as an extremist, whose clothes might appeal only to those few women who live at the outer reaches of fashion, or as a designer's designer (like Thierry Mugler, with whom he is often compared), whose technical achievements—with cut, with an inventive use of leathers and suèdes—were too esoteric to be appreciated by anyone but insiders. But, while other designers sometimes paraphrased his message in more moderate terms, Montana was consistently in the thick of things—setting the pace, summing up the spirit of the times—though his sales figures surely don't reflect his influence. At a time when overtones of S & M (black leather, steel grommets and chains) were finding their way from the gay subculture into the mainstream, and city-dwellers were buying into a rarefied notion of the Wild West (Frye boots for women, thousand-dollar crocodile cowboy boots for men), Montana ingeniously combined both trends, in aggressive-shouldered leather coats, fringed and studded with nailheads. The padded shoulders that characterized the past ten years in fashion were consistently the outstanding feature of Montana's clothes; the prevailing silhouette, an inverted triangle, was in his collections even more exaggerated. Throughout the eighties, it has been Montana and Mugler who have seemed in a hurry to get where we are going, both of them working in a style best described as "futuristic"—space-age clothes, sewn in contoured panels for a taut fit, like extraterrestrial suits of armor for Barbarellas of the eighties. Now, however, Mugler's futurism is, ironically, looking dated, and most buyers and members of the press have agreed this season that Montana's new approach is setting the pace for the next decade.

His departure from the effects that are by now his trademarks has been gradual and deliberate. The big shoulders are gone; so is the contoured fit. Last season, with his "Charpei" sheared mink coats and swingy jackets, Montana announced a whole new set of concerns—drapery, fluidity, movement, minimal construction—but it was with this collection, for spring, that those concerns became the elements of a new look.

Two and a half weeks before Montana unveiled his spring collection in Paris, Ruttenstein, who, with the other buyers on the circuit, was in Milan to see the Italian shows, attended a "mini-show," an informal preview in a converted apartment on the Via Moscova. (The secrecy that used to enshroud fashion houses during the final weeks before the shows has over the past several years given way to a marketing strategy that enables retailers to get a head start on their orders and so insure earlier delivery.) To the falsetto accompaniment of Mrs. Miller warbling "I Love Paris," the models strolled, with less ceremony than usual, down a black-carpeted aisle between two rows of black lacquer folding chairs. There were chiffon blouses and sheer jerseys, wide-leg linen pants softened with vertical rows of fagoting or a chiffon scarflike sash draped at the hips, linen shorts with halterlike accordion-pleated "suspenders," lightweight wool jackets with accordion-pleated shawl collars. The cut was sensuous and innovative, and the colors were lush and sophisticated, in combinations of closely related shades—putty, steel, elephant, and oyster gray, or buttermilk, manila, saffron, and ivory. On the basis of this much alone, it was apparent that the gray group was particularly important, that what Ruttenstein called the "flyaway jacket," a trapeze style flared from just below the shoulder blades, was a significant new shape, and that skirts didn't figure in the picture.

Never taking his eyes off the clothes, Ruttenstein kept up a steady stream of asides: "Claude's been saying for two years now that he's stopped using shoulder pads, but this time there really aren't any," and "There must be a million pants here," and "These clothes are *cut*. As I always say, he's the only couturier without a couture house." Experience has taught Ruttenstein that the ideas he sees on Montana's runway have a way of turning up a few weeks later on Seventh Avenue. Despite the absence of leathers and suèdes (for which Montana is famous), of knits, and of evening clothes, all of which are usually added just before the show in Paris, the collection was obviously one of the season's best and one of Montana's best ever. Watching its logic unfold, Ruttenstein looked delighted.

After the Milan preview was over, Ruttenstein repaired to a small room across the hall, where Michelle Heelan, Bloomingdale's buyer for Montana, and Andrew Basile, the store's senior fashion coördinator, were making their way through a loose-leaf notebook. On the right-hand pages, small rectangles of fabric with pinked edges were glued in rows, to show the color choices; on the facing pages were sketches of individual pieces alongside their style numbers. Heelan began writing the Bloomingdale's order now, choosing several pieces from the so-called "capsule" group, which is meant to leave the factory at the end of January, nearly a month before the rest of the spring collection. She would finish the order in Paris, after the show there. Lucie Shlafer, Montana's women's-marketing director for North America, suggested possible color combinations and answered questions about the shipping schedule. A model in a one-piece bathing suit obligingly changed into and out of some samples hanging on a rack. Basile took a Polaroid picture of each, for the record. Heelan proceeded methodically, one group at a time, dismissing certain pieces because they were "not easy"—her way of saying that they might be difficult to sell, because they weren't suited to many different body types.

In the past eleven years, since Ruttenstein joined Bloomingdale's and the store started carrying Montana, the clothes have gradually made their way up through the departmental ranks: from Paradox, which features clothes by young, slightly irreverent designers, through the "imports" department, which is home to European designers whose clothes are more serious (and often more expensive), to a full-fledged Claude Montana boutique.

Like a handful of other retailers who have been buying Montana since the early days, and watching his reputation and his business grow, Ruttenstein talks about him in proprietary terms. The quintessential Montana customer, to his mind, is the Bloomingdale's customer—a woman who is "on the cutting edge." He defines Montana's look as "a very New York kind of style, very advanced," and says, "This is strong fashion, made for strong city ladies—it's not a suburban look. It works well with skyscrapers and city pavements. I think that when new fashion silhouettes are fast-breaking our customers look for them quickly. I've worked at stores where there are affluent customers who are perhaps more conservative. We have inveterate shoppers—women who shop a lot and look for news. I think they want sexy clothes and clothes that are signature statements. When our customers buy Chanel, they often like it to be recognizably Chanel, and the same is true for Montana."

Heelan sees her job as part reporter and part editor, with a duty "to cover the collection and to represent Montana's 'message' in terms that the woman who shops at Bloomingdale's will understand." This season, as in every season, she bought a lot of pants. (This season, there is not much else to buy at Montana if one wants to be clothed from the waist down.) "He makes great pants," she says. "They fit right—everybody wants them." But, because most of her loyal Montana customers are small, she also asked for a slim skirt; there is always one available, she has found, even if it isn't shown on the runway. "A shorter lady is going to put these wide-leg pants on and look like a dump truck," she explains. "So if she likes the jacket, what am I going to do—tell her to forget it? No, I always like to give her an option."

Ruttenstein's gaze settled on one of the signature T-shirts he had spotted in the show—an oversized putty-gray cotton jersey with "Montana" written across the front in big black freehand script.

"Money in the bank," Basile said, reading Ruttenstein's mind.

"Do you have them at the right price?" Ruttenstein asked, in a voice loud enough for Mike Shlafer, Lucie's husband and Montana's marketing director for menswear in North America, to hear. "So we can sell a million?"

Shlafer was sitting at a small desk by the door, figuring prices, punching numbers into a calculator. "I'm doing them now," he said. "I'll give you a range."

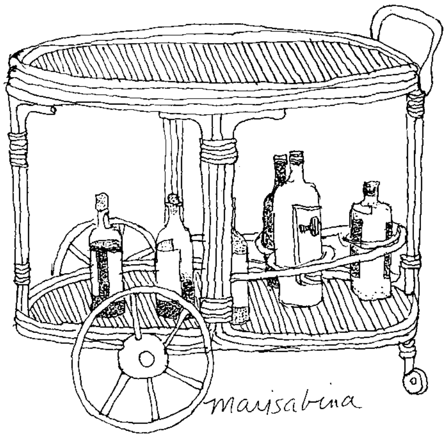
"Remember the Chanel T-shirt," Ruttenstein admonished him. The story of the Chanel T-shirt is a modern-day parable for the garment industry, the sad tale of a simple white cotton T-shirt with "Chanel No. 5" printed on the front in black, which was introduced by Chanel two years ago, at a price far too high; in no time, other manufacturers had copied it and, underselling Chanel, made a killing. "It didn't do Chanel any good," Ruttenstein said darkly.

"Figure two-twenty, two-fifty average retail price," Mike Shlafer said.

"You want us to sell *T-shirts* at that price?" Ruttenstein asked.

Montana himself entered, greeted people all around, and exited, leaving behind a blurred impression of black leather, blond hair, furtive eyes, and a firm handshake.

"Those T-shirts," Ruttenstein said, still not satisfied. "You should get them to do them cheaper. We could sell *thousands* of these. Really, you should do this as a loss leader."



"That's a Hamptons T-shirt if I ever saw one," Basile said.

"You have to go back and ask," Ruttenstein insisted, and Mike Shlafer promised to have some other numbers, lower and more precise, by the time Ruttenstein got to Paris.

THE Paris show confirms a good many of the hunches that veteran Montana-buyers had in Milan. He leads off with the gray group, the most succinct statement of his message this season: there are practically no skirts, and there are no leathers, only suèdes. No signature T-shirts. The mood is serious and consistent, building slowly and steadily to the last *passage*, for evening—a group of midnight-blue chiffon jackets, seductively draped over matching wide-leg pants or a long sarong skirt, which are shown in blackness with a single night-club spotlight, to the accompaniment of Edith Piaf singing "La Foule."

Four days later, Joan Weinstein, who owns and operates a designer specialty store called Ultimo, in Chicago, arrives for her appointment at the makeshift Montana showroom, in the Maison de la Chimie, on the Rue Saint-Dominique. Weinstein and Lynne Sable, her assistant, slump down in their chairs; this is their third week away from home, and today they are running on three hours' sleep. A large woman with a distinctive style, Weinstein is dressed in a black tunic and black pants, spike heels, an armload of Bakelite bangle bracelets, and several diamond-and-ruby rings, which she wears stacked on two fingers; her upswept hair is held in place by plastic tortoiseshell clips. Sable, also tall, with short black hair and a mild English accent, is in black, too. They are wearing lipstick in an identical shade of red, which they have just bought at the Galeries Lafayette.

Like the Bloomingdale's team, Weinstein got a head start on her order in Milan, but she held a good portion of her budget in reserve, to spend on the evening clothes and whatever else Montana might add at the last minute. "They had an early delivery, which we completely ignored," she says. "For me, it was rather boring. The colors were dark and dismal, and it was all done in cool wool. I just bought the

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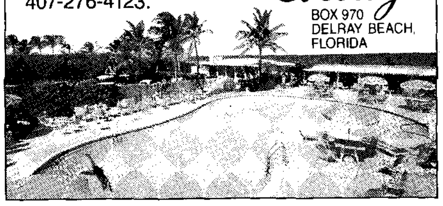

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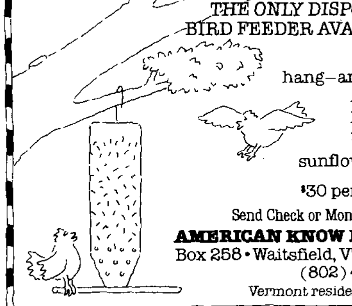


things that would dazzle, even with delivery problems."

Weinstein is in a position to buy as she pleases. She married a man whose background was in textiles in New York and retailing in Chicago, and twenty years ago they founded Ultimo together. Three years later, he died of a heart attack. Weinstein carried on, and today she is the proprietor of two "spinoff" stores—a three-story Giorgio Armani boutique and a Sonia Rykiel shop—as well as of the original store, which fills two town houses and includes a men's department. Weinstein talks about this store as if the selling floor were her living room. She knows everything that goes on there. Many of the customers are by now her friends ("We dress them for the events in their lives," she says), and she often goes on buying expeditions with their specific requests in mind. (On this trip, she found a dress for a woman who wanted something coral for her son's wedding.) She has handpicked the staff, and she selects the store's merchandise according to her personal taste, with no apologies and no attempt to provide something for everyone.

At Ultimo, the store's identity comes across more clearly than the identity of any single designer. There are no in-store boutiques, no walls separating one designer from the next, no "little alcoves." Weinstein groups all the clothes by one designer together but doesn't keep them consistently in one place. "We move them constantly," she explains. "They don't have their own home in the store. If we have a shipment that looks wonderful, that'll be at the top of the stairs, and then, as things sell away, we move them around." She has trained her sales staff to know the merchandise and to be able to combine clothes by different designers, a practice that fashion magazines and most stores find heretical—though, of course, women do it all the time.

Weinstein feels under no obligation to present Montana's clothes as he has presented them in his show. "The runway is *his* palette," she says. "If he's showing pants, it's because that's what he's pushing. It doesn't mean that you have to agree with it and do it that way for your store." Though she attends Montana's shows faithfully and admires them, she describes them as "very theatrical," and says that, as a result, "they don't always tell you what the clothes are going to look like in the store or on real people." For her purposes she prefers seeing the clothes in Italy, before the show, "because that's the way the customer sees them, firsthand, for the first time."

As Sable fills in the order form, she numbers the clothes so that the pieces that work together are grouped together, and that is how they will be sold. A copy of this order goes to the store's shipping department: if, by chance, one piece of a group is delivered before the rest, the people in shipping will know they're to hold that piece until the others arrive.

Among Weinstein's favorite items are a jacket folded double at the center back, with the top layer cut shorter, to look like a bolero over a vest, and the long trapeze jacket. "For us, it was really very clear this season," she says. "We've been buying Montana ever since he's been in business. When you buy someone year after year, you sort out the things you've seen before and buy only what's new."

Sometimes, Weinstein says, she likes something that she doesn't think she can sell, but she'll buy at least one example of it, in the hope that "maybe somebody will come along who will love it, too." This season, what she liked was a midnight-blue evening suit; the jacket alone, its lapels cut out and embroidered with spider-web openwork, will sell for close to fifty-four hundred dollars, retail. Weinstein bought two—one for herself and one for the store—but says that if there were two customers with their hearts set on this suit she'd relinquish hers.

Despite the occasional potted palm and the racks of clothes arranged as partitions around the tables, there is not much privacy in the showroom. Weinstein and Sable occasionally glance to their right, to see what the fitting model is trying on for the folks from Charivari. A buyer from Neiman Marcus crosses the room to greet Weinstein and to admire her Bakelite jewelry at closer range. "We have tons of this at the store," Weinstein tells her. "That way, the woman who's really fat who comes in and can't fit into any of the clothes can still buy something."

To Weinstein's mind, the quintessential Montana customer is *her* customer—"a working woman, a city woman." Twenty years ago, when Ultimo opened, Weinstein's best customers were the wife of Mr. So-and-So and the girlfriend of Mr. Somebody. "Today," she says, "my customers are women who own their own businesses." There is, she finds, a parallel between what Montana is doing in his clothing and what she is doing in her store. Though she has met him only a few times—and only to say hello—she says that she can tell by his work that they are on the same wavelength. In contrast with designers like Valentino and Ungaro, whose clothes she calls "our grownup lines," Montana makes clothes that don't imply an age. "They're not young, and they're not old," Weinstein says. "They can be worn by a woman of any age as long as she's young in the brain. You can be sixty and wearing Montana, and if you understand what you're wearing you look incredible in it."

HERBERT FINK, the proprietor of the Claude Montana boutique on Rodeo Drive, in Beverly Hills—the only store in the United States entirely devoted to Montana—contends that the quintessential Montana customer is the California girl. "I think Claude thinks of himself as Western," Fink says. "He has that Marlboro-man look." Montana's colors, to Fink's way of thinking, are Southwestern, "very Santa Fe," and his clothes are "designed for open spaces, like art."

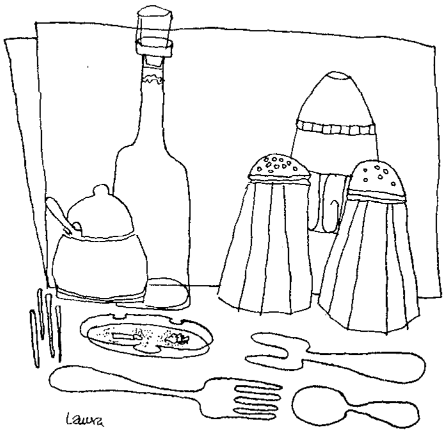
"These are not citified clothes—they look better out in the open than around big buildings or in crowded places," Fink says. "New Yorkers see themselves in a dark environment, whereas we Southern Californians see ourselves in a light environment. New York retailers buy a lot of black; we're capable of selling a lot of white.

"We look to do a runway concept. We're not playing it safe by any means. We feel that when you wear Montana you should *look* like you're wearing Montana. If you want clothing that's basic and classic, you can get that from a lot of designers."

The Montana boutique, a one-story building of gray concrete, glass brick, and steel tile, with black simulated-leather curtains on the dressing rooms, and a high "Montana blue" ceiling pierced with little lights, like stars, is a four-year-old offshoot of Fink's more established store, called Theodore, a hundred feet or so down Rodeo Drive. Theodore is dedicated to the pursuit of what Fink defines as "the Southern California life style"—in his words, "easy clothes" and "casual elegance." Nobody in the world, he says, does casual clothes better than Southern California. "You ever see a New Yorker put on casual clothes?" he asks, rolling his eyes. "They don't know how to put them together. Casual for them is a jogging suit—they really don't understand the concept. For New Yorkers, casual clothes are what you wear on the weekend."

During the late sixties and the seventies, Theodore featured clothes by not yet famous European designers like Sonia Rykiel, Gianfranco Ferre, and Gianni Versace, and sweaters by Krizia and Missoni. Gradually, as their businesses grew, these designers left the store to open boutiques in their own names. With Montana, Fink says, Theodore was "in at the beginning," buying his clothes back in the days when he was designing for other people, without a label of his own. Wanting to hold on to the line, Fink opened a boutique for Montana before Montana could secede from Theodore and open one for himself. As for Theodore, it continues to sell sportswear by European designers, primarily French, and also has a private-label line, designed by Fink's wife, Norma.

A practitioner of the gospel he preaches, Fink turns up for his appointment at the Maison de la Chimie sporting a tan, a black crewneck sweater over a white T-shirt, and a bracelet the same shade of silver as his hair. With him are Norma, a genial woman with round eyes in a round face, who is wearing a deep-red Montana jacket and navy jodhpurs of her own design, and their daughter, Lisa, a minute blonde, in a black turtleneck and black pants. Both Norma and Lisa take an active part in running the stores. Here Lisa sketches the clothes in precise detail. (The sketches will eventually be photocopied and sent to the store's most loyal customers, who reserve pieces in advance.) She and Norma discuss their choices as Herbert looks on. He is an old pro at this business, with an air of calm—his chin resting on the palm of his hand—that every so often verges on boredom. From time to time, he volunteers an opinion or casts a vote as the tiebreaker: save the navy for the daytime look; don't match the pants to the blouse, go lighter; take the pants in the silk instead of the linen.



"The Montana customer is a secure person," he says. "She knows who she is, where she's going, what she's all about. She's not looking to be very feminine, not looking for frills, not looking to be cute. She is an aggressive person and probably a successful person—not necessarily out in the workplace but successful in her life style, no matter what she does. She has to have money. And she can be anywhere between eighteen and eighty years old." The woman who wears Montana, Fink adds, is not a follower, "and she's not a fashion victim—you don't find that so much in Montana."

Norma agrees: "The woman who wears this is very sure of herself, very sophisticated. I think the California girl is more sophisticated than the New York girl. I think that there's a lot of pseudosophistication in big cities. Sophistication to me is being natural, to be able to be who you are. In California, we're more health-conscious, body-conscious, look-conscious, but not with a lot of makeup. It's a different environment. You don't look good in makeup in all that sunshine."

Fink characterizes his Montana clientele as a "cult," and buys accordingly. "Everyone who is part of the cult is going to want the same one or two styles," he says. "A lot of buyers order the same quantity of everything, but we don't. We want to get our volume in the one piece, so we decide which one everybody's going to wear, and concentrate on that."

Before the Finks left for Europe, they had already, on the basis of some sketches, ordered a selection of what Herbert calls "Montana classics" from the "capsule" group and when they got to Milan, he says, "we went and looked at what we had done, just to reassure ourselves." Today, they proceed at a brisk, steady pace, making their selections without deliberation, remarking on the clothes as they go.

Norma, on a linen suit with a portrait neckline draped with accordion pleating, in white: "Actually, you could get married in that."

Herbert, on the new wide-leg pants: "Everybody else is doing wide pants, but we're going to be doing straight pants, too. When you get to the West Coast, girls have good bodies and they want to show them off."

Lisa, on the double-fold jacket that was a Joan Weinstein favorite: "I can see a rock star coming in and buying this as a separate piece."

Herbert, on ordering Montana when you have what he calls "a West Coast point of view": "We buy a lot of things to look more casual. Just a shirt and pants, for instance—not the jacket. In California, women aren't looking to buy the whole suit."

Norma, on the shape of the new jackets: "We're asking for shoulder pads, and we find we're not alone in this. I can't wear clothing without shoulder pads—I won't. The American woman has become so accustomed to the boost they give her that I don't think she'll be willing to give them up. The shoulder will be modified at the factory when the pad is put in. The new pad will be contoured, so that it's there but virtually unnoticeable. And then, if I can do anything to help with alterations when the clothes get to the store, I will."

For years now, Norma says, the Montana line has been her favorite line "in the world," and she confesses to having been initially a little disappointed with the new direction Montana has taken this season. "I *was* that Montana girl," she says wistfully. "He gave us big shoulders at a time when women were trying to be more aggressive, and his clothes maybe gave us a little more confidence. Now Thierry Mugler is still doing those kinds of clothes, but there's one difference, and it's a rather big difference as far as I'm concerned—the taste level isn't as high. Mugler's clothes are a little whorey, like you're working the street. I wouldn't wear a Mugler suit to a lunch with ladies who are raising money for the symphony. Whereas I *would* wear a Montana suit. They might think that I'm wilder than they are, and even a little crazy, but not so crazy as to be déclassé."

All finished in the front room, the Finks adjourn to the room opposite, to order the leathers and suèdes, the knits, and the accessories. Mike Shlafer shows them a navy suède bolero that has openwork embroidery on the lapels, like the midnight-blue evening jacket. "I think it's beautiful," Fink says diplomatically. "I just don't know what you'd wear it with."

The Finks look less than enthusiastic about the knits. There are polo shirts modelled on one of the jackets in the collection, with the backs cut in vertical slats, to retail for three hundred and eighty dollars. "They need an 'M,' like the crocodile or the polo player, on the front," Fink counsels Shlafer. "Then they stand a better chance."

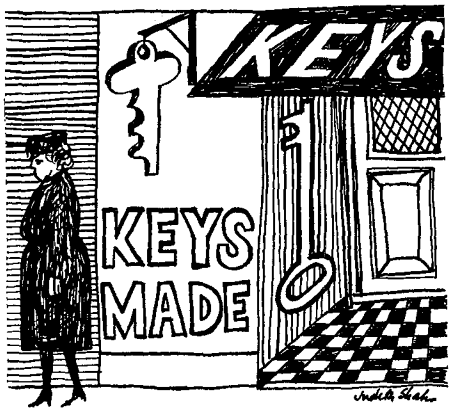
In the end, the Finks buy "as little of the knits as possible," and only a few of the suède jackets, in unusual colors, "which will look beautiful in the store," Herbert says.

Norma looks on while Lisa selects some high-heeled pumps. "You don't want any medium heels?" she asks.

"Women in L.A. buy high heels, to show off their legs," Lisa answers.

The final prices on the signature T-shirts, as it turns out, are even higher, ranging from two hundred and forty to three hundred and twenty-five dollars, retail. Fink shakes his head in disbelief. There are two versions with the name written large and larger across the front, and one with the name written very large, all the way around. "Montana, Montana, Mo," they say, hanging side by side.

Mike Shlafer points out the features that justify the price—the fine quality of the jersey, the black velvetlike lettering, the mitred corners at the neckband. He explains that Montana refuses to do them differently to make them cheaper. "He knows that he could sell hundreds of them, but he doesn't care."



LIKE Fink, Ruttenstein was disappointed in the T-shirts; Heelan bought a sampling of them, nowhere near the quantities they had first envisioned in Milan. Joan Weinstein bought a couple. "They'll look great in the windows," she said. Ultimo has two windows, each of which usually features two outfits—one for a man, one for a woman, not necessarily by the same designer—displayed to look as if they were walking down the street together.

Bloomingdale's has six windows on Lexington Avenue alone, all of them to be devoted to Montana's collection when it arrives, in March. Ruttenstein likes to select what he calls "the most directional *passage*" for the windows, and often asks Montana's advice. This time, however, Ruttenstein resolved after seeing the show to fill the windows with the midnight-blue chiffon evening group, but, for a variety of practical reasons, Claire Pommerencke, Montana's longtime assistant, talked him out of it, persuading him to feature the gray group that had opened the show instead. When Ruttenstein agreed, Heelan was pleased: she felt that the windows would boost her sales of the daywear, whereas the evening clothes, though they might make a more dramatic statement, were priced too high to sell in quantity. The final decision was made in concert—Ruttenstein with Basile, Heelan, and Robin Laurentano, Bloomingdale's window designer. They settled on the trapeze jackets (both a long and a short version), sheer blouses, wide-leg pants, and jumpsuits, all in linen, silk, and chiffon, and in three shades of gray—oyster, lichen, and charcoal. It was, Basile believed, not only the "pyramid" silhouette and the fluidity of the clothes but the tricolor combination that was the message; most people and most stores, he said, wouldn't think to combine more than two shades.

As for the sheer blouses, which Montana showed with nothing underneath, every buying team arrived at its own way to make them attractive to women who don't want to walk around bare-breasted, without compromising Montana's idea. Of the various permutations, Ruttenstein liked one that was solid (linen) on top and sheer (chiffon) on the bottom, with a line of fagoting in a Greek-key motif as the demarcation, at the midriff. Heelan also bought a sheer georgette turtleneck, which, she said, could be covered with the cross-draped accordion-pleated halter. Weinstein opted for matching camisoles, which were included in the line but hadn't been shown on the runway. For the customer who doesn't want a camisole, she will suggest that the front of the blouse be double- or triple-lined in more chiffon—a project for Ultimo's alterations department. Weinstein also bought, from the accessories line, a sheaf of scarves in matching chiffon, for women to drape strategically across their chests. The Finks bought a few of the sheer turtlenecks, but mostly they put their money on the chiffon shirt with patch pockets covering the breasts.

Each team leaves home with a set amount of money to spend—an amount based on past sales, sales in the current season so far, and an accountant's projections for the season ahead. What happens, then, if the collection exceeds expectations?

"There's always money for fabulous," Heelan says.

Weinstein can stretch her budget if she needs to. "If we find something at the end of our trip and all our money is gone, I go ahead and buy it," she says. "I always think I can sell more than the accountant tells us."

Herbert Fink's store is predicated on the notion that every Montana collection will be a good collection; faced with a particularly good one, like this season's, he might increase his volume, but only slightly.

In a season when the designer's collection isn't quite up to par, the retailers make do in different ways. Heelan buys for other designer boutiques within Bloomingdale's—Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, Perry Ellis—and also for the Paradox (Jean-Paul Gaultier, Franco Moschino, Isaac Mizrahi) and imports (Myrène de Prémonville, Patrick Kelly) departments; the amount of money allocated for each of these is an estimate, and the buyer can invest a little more in one designer, a little less in another, depending on the quality of that season's collections. "No one's perfect every season, though some are a little more consistent than others," she says. "Basically, we don't cut anybody back. It's important to have continuity with the manufacturer. In a bad season, I try to narrow into what's best and buy more of that."

The amount that Weinstein spends on a single designer varies from season to season. "There are designers who have minimums, and you have to buy a certain amount," she says. "But, beyond that, if we love it we can buy more and if we don't we can buy less."

"I feel I have an obligation, which is one of the problems of owning a designer boutique," Fink says. "If somebody makes a bad bowl of soup, I'm stuck with it. But I try to be smart enough and knowledgeable enough to find where to lean within the collection. If they've given you a certain amount of exclusivity, you have to be loyal, through good collections and bad collections. If you find something that really is terrific in the line, you buy a lot of it and make your money off of that, so that it supports something else."

When it comes to the fashion press, Ruttenstein, perhaps because he's in New York, pays a little more attention to the daily critics than Weinstein, who may read them out of curiosity, or Fink, who mostly ignores them. All three acknowledge that what fashion magazines, by their very nature, are looking for is something entirely different from what buyers are looking for; the little absurdities, the high drama, the inside jokes that make for good entertainment on the runway or in fashion photographs are lost on the customer in the store. As his daughter is ordering a linen tunic, Fink waves off Lucie Shlafer's advice that "the press is going to be doing mocha on this." This tunic in mocha, he says, is something that only someone who isn't a retailer could love.

—HOLLY BRUBACH

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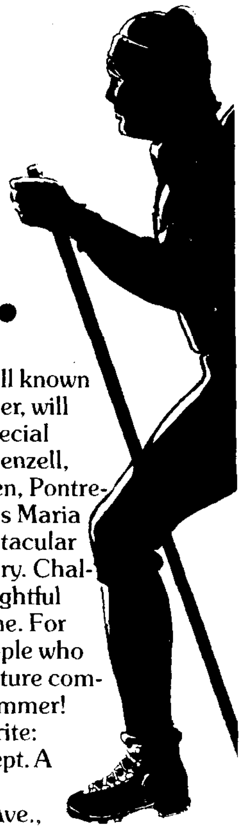
[*Carrie Rickey in Fame*]

When Eastwood premiered *Bird* at Cannes last May, the largely jaded community there was struck by his reluctant presence in the firmament of celebrity meteors and would-be supernovas. Meteors, as every stargazer knows, have velocity and dazzle. Their glittery, white-hot tango can temporarily eclipse those enduring, slow burners like the red giants, which sometimes look deceptively dim. Red giants aren't twinklers, so stargazers—notable at Cannes as astrologers as well as astronomers—overlook the fact that their low surface temperature permits them to glow one hundred times brighter than the sun. Here's a man who could glow in the dark.



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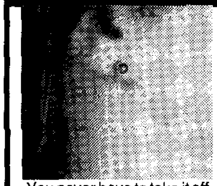

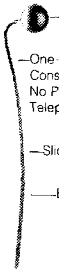

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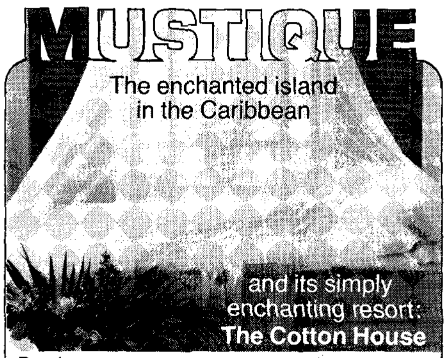

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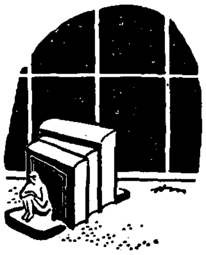
BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

DECEITS OF TIME, by Isabel Colegate (Viking; $17.95). Miss Colegate, an English novelist whose book "The Shooting Party" was one of the serious pleasures of 1981, here makes buoyant use of a device as old and as unworn as storytelling itself—the lifting of the mask. A middle-aged woman biographer is generously commissioned by her publisher to write the official life of one Neil Campion, a Royal Flying Corps ace in the Great War, a freelance flier in East Africa in the twenties, and an active Conservative Member of Parliament in the thirties, who was killed in a car accident while on a mysterious journey to Scotland in 1941, and is now survived only by an elderly widow, an elderly and unmarried brother and sister, and a teen-age grandson. The writer's quest—her search for data, her interviews, her intuitions and assumptions—is Miss Colegate's story, and, written in a lucid prose that both pleases and prods, it shows us how and why "most people are wrong about most things most of the time."



ANYTHING FOR BILLY, by Larry McMurtry (Simon & Schuster; $18.95). The author's fourteenth book is a Western in the tradition of his Pulitzer Prize winner, "Lonesome Dove." This one boasts Billy the Kid as its star, a delicate youth with lousy aim and no conscience; he gets headaches easily and kills simply to keep up with his reputation. The story's true hero is the narrator, Ben Sippy, a cultured Easterner and a writer of dime novels who has left his unlovable wife and nine daughters in Philadelphia to try his hand at the kind of adventures he's been romanticizing in his books. He falls in with Billy and is quickly disillusioned: "The dime novelists might portray gunfighters as a confident, satisfied lot . . . but the truth is they were mainly disappointed men." He becomes thoroughly depressed by the random killing he witnesses in a series of picaresque encounters that both mock the Wild West and pay homage to it. There are Indians, sandstorms, beautiful women, and pathetic little towns where cards are played and whiskey is drunk—all worthy of a good dime novel—but the best bits are Ben's descriptions of nights "by a little flicker of campfire, on a plain so vast you couldn't even think of the end of it, under a sky as huge as time."

MEMORIES OF AMNESIA, by Lawrence Shainberg (British American Publishing; $16.95). In the midst of performing neurosurgery, Isaac Drogin forgets his patient's name, sings a song, and begins to hear voices. The operation is for epilepsy, and leaves the patient without the faculty of speech. Drogin reflects, "I felt ninety percent sure that she'd be speaking again within forty-eight hours, and I estimated her chances of being seizure-free at somewhere between thirty and forty percent. . . . I'd say that her prognosis then was not too much worse than my own," and he goes on to make his rounds of a collection of bizarre sufferers. Every symptom he has ever studied presents itself as his own, but he cannot decide if he has suffered brain damage or is conducting a brilliant rebellion against the tyranny of an organ that makes one believe that it is the self. The oscillations between ecstasy and befuddlement constitute the movement of what is, in fact, a comedy. Two hundred and nineteen pages of circularity inevitably have their longueurs, but along the way they are, you might say, thought-provoking.

NOTE: "Selected Stories of Sylvia Townsend Warner" has been published by Viking ($24.95). Many of the stories originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

MRS. THATCHER'S REVOLUTION: THE ENDING OF THE SOCIALIST ERA, by Peter Jenkins (Harvard; $25). Though by no means an endorsement of the policies of the British Prime Minister, this lively book treats Thatcherism less as an enemy to be destroyed than as a phenomenon to be understood. Mr. Jenkins' narrative of the decade of Mrs. Thatcher's dominance includes accounts of immediate events, such as the miners' strike of 1984, and investigations of long-term trends, such as the declining number of trade-union members. His early comment that well before Mrs. Thatcher formed her first ministry, in 1979, both the right and the left had been campaigning against the government points toward his conclusion that her regime has been "as much a consequence as a cause" of the breakdown of an earlier consensus. Mr. Jenkins' style and insights would make his tour of contemporary British politics a pleasure in any case, but his book's special fascination, at least for American readers, is the remarkable similarity between the British and American electorates.

TELLING MEMORIES AMONG SOUTHERN WOMEN: DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS IN THE SEGREGATED SOUTH, by Susan Tucker (Louisiana; $24.95), and WITHIN THE PLANTATION HOUSEHOLD: BLACK AND WHITE WOMEN OF THE OLD SOUTH, by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (North Carolina; $34.95 cloth, $12.95 paper). In an artful oral history that spans most of this century, Ms. Tucker interviews white Southern women employers and black women servants. White women assume that the black women who cared for their households and children were content, but blacks recall with especial bitterness their absence from their own homes and children while they tended those of whites. Several employers discuss such improvements as minimum wages and Social Security, but none seem fully to grasp their employees' distrust of them. The author, herself a young white Southerner, is an attractive but not obtrusive presence; her subtext hints that domestic service is inherently so inegalitarian as to be un-American. Professor Fox-Genovese's well-written and thoroughly researched social history deals with Southern households in the days of slavery, and she takes issue with other American social historians for relying on New England as normative; with black historians for overestimating

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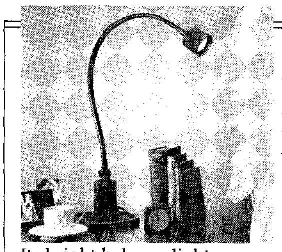

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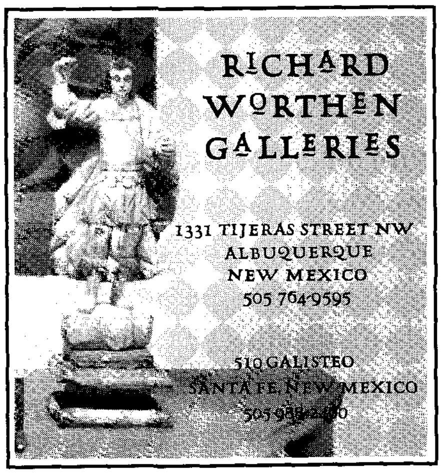
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the persistence of African models among slaves; and with women's historians for emphasizing sisterly feelings between white women and the black women they owned. None of the author's historical generalizations are as telling as her facts—the details of the matter-of-fact brutality of plantation life. Although these two books deal with different periods and circumstances, they come to the same conclusion: race and class divided Southern women more than their sex united them.

EQUATOR: A JOURNEY, by Thurston Clarke (Morrow; $20.95). In 1984, the author, an adventurous American writer, took it into his head to follow the great notional line around the earth's midsection. In two years and a little more, he completed his ambitious and rather arbitrary project; this extraordinary book is his report on it. He began in South America, near the mouth of the Amazon, which the equator bisects; proceeded by stages through the jungles, deserts, and towns of equatorial Africa and Asia to islands in the Pacific; and ended up, after a visit to Quito, back at the Amazon. What rescues the book from any taint of the stunt is its rich substance—color, variety, humor. Mr. Clarke is an observer with a keen eye for oddity and the significant detail. He tells us about the various people who live at or near the equator, where there is neither dawn nor twilight, and how their lives have been affected by it, and describes the novel ways some of them have devised to exploit it. Maps.

NOTE: "Mr. Personality," a collection of pieces by Mark Singer, has been published by Knopf ($18.95). All the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker.*

•

ABC's "Incredible Sunday" reported on a medical advance in which head-injury patients are taught to write country music.
—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

Incredible, all right, but not necessarily a good idea.

•

AMERICA, AMERICA

[*TV listing in the Portland (Ore.) Oregonian.*]

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(2) AM NORTHWEST Former prostitutes discuss life on the streets; tips for weekend entertaining; household hints.

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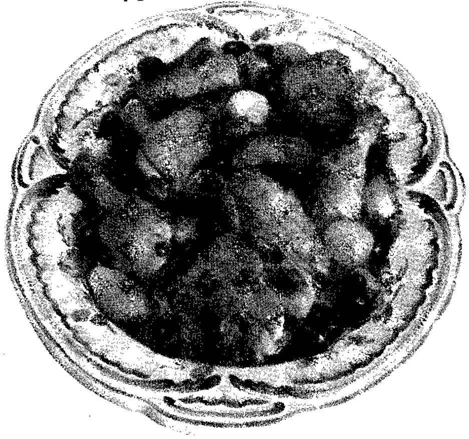

nog Pie; Baked French Toast; Onion Soup with Camembert; Fettucine with Ham, Spinach, and Cream. Sometimes rich and lusty, as with Pan-Fried Potatoes with Salami and Mozzarella, White Bean Pancakes with Bacon; or simple with a more subtle succulence as in Herbed Chicken Paillards, Orzo and Artichoke Salad, Chilled Watercress Soup, Pita Pizzas.

WOW

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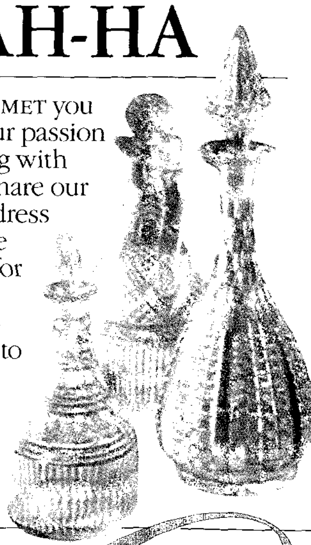
AH-HA



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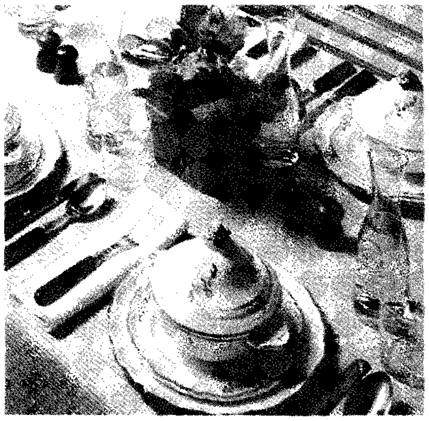

and salad suppers. Three-day menu plans for weekend guests.

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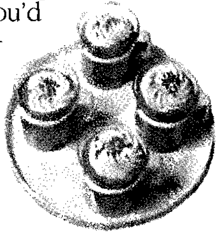

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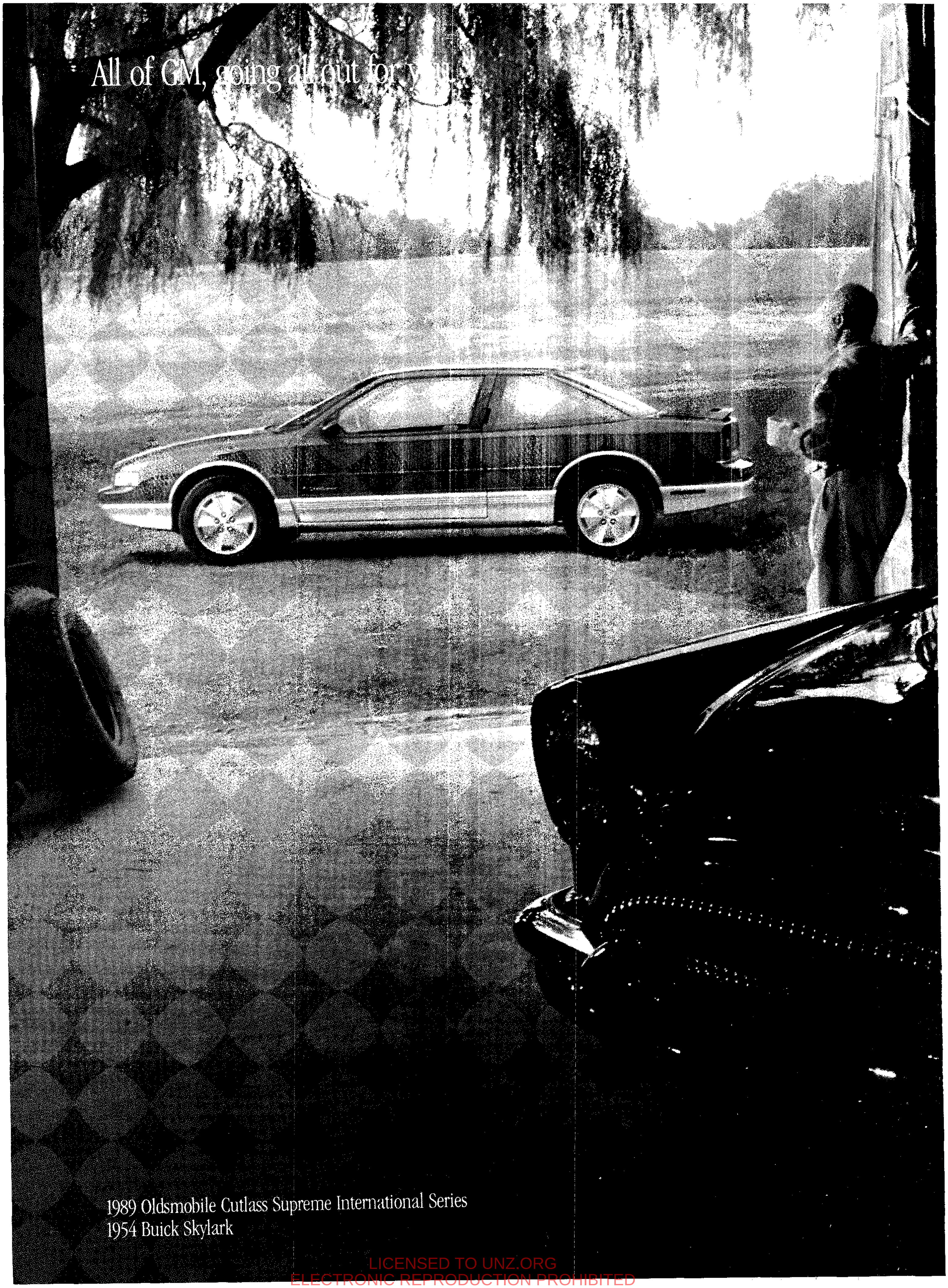
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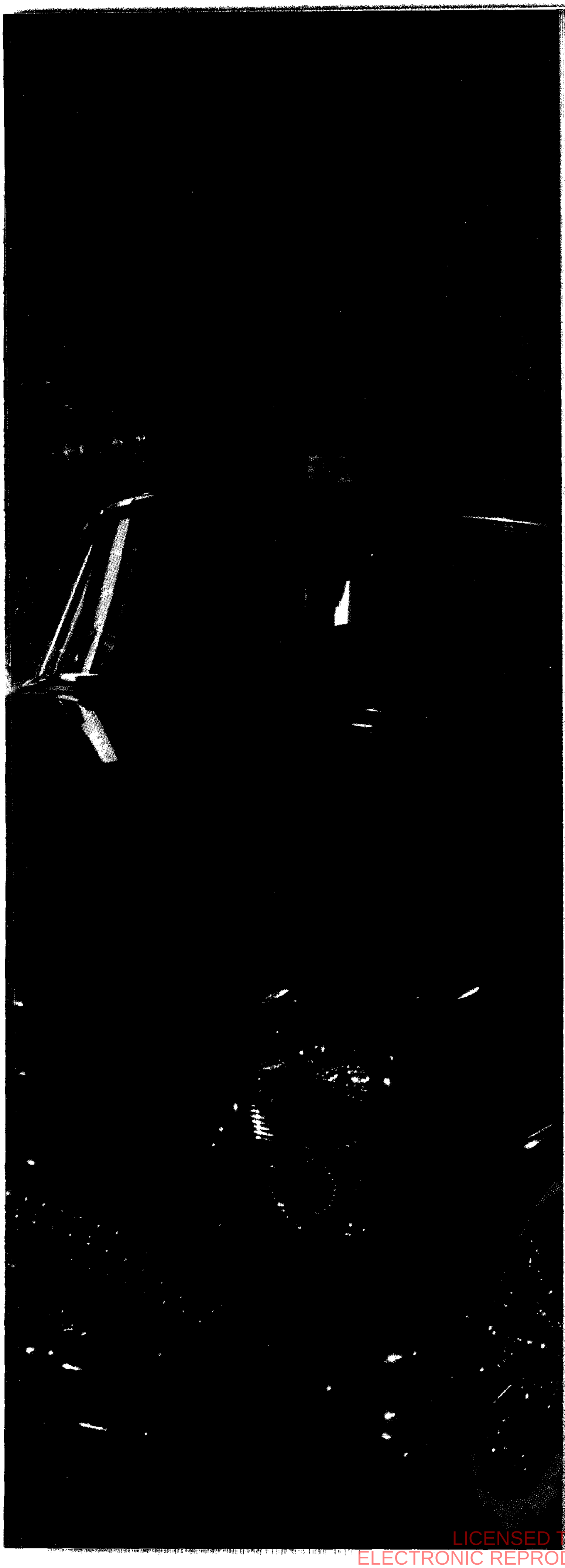

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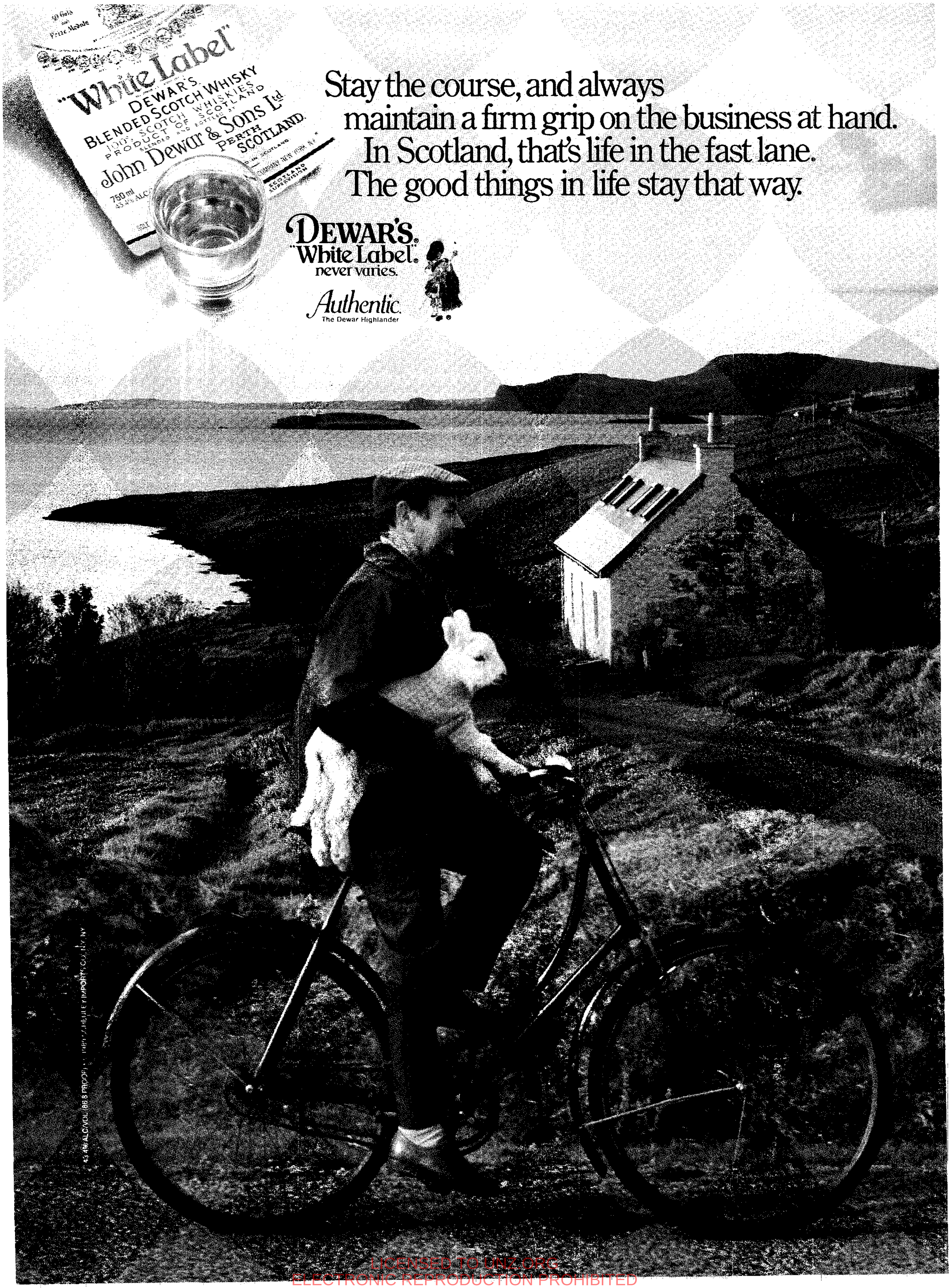
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